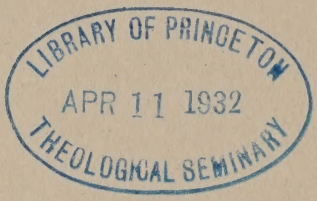
THEY KNEW JESUS

EDWIN MOORE MARTIN



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They knew Jesus

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A SERIES OF
EVANGELISTIC SERMONS
IN NARRATIVE FORM

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By

EDWIN MOORE MARTIN
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CINCINNATI, OHIO

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INTRODUCTION

For many years it has been my custom to preach, at every service from January first to Easter Sunday, evangelistic sermons following generally accepted methods. Experience long ago convinced me that the persons whom I wished to reach with these appeals were not sitting in my auditorium just waiting to hear the invitation to accept Christ before leaping to their feet to confess their faith in Him whom I had presented for their consideration. This fact, with the added consciousness that the very large majority—and in some instances all—of my hearers were already professed followers of Jesus, took much of the urge out of the message, and the appeal lost its force.

In planning for the winter weeks of evangelistic effort for the season of 1926-1927, I was led to depart from the usual method. The plan adopted was to select lives of men who had come into touch with Jesus Christ while He lived among men—lives that had been transformed by Him, and lives that had shown no results other than negative from such relationship—and to tell the story of these individuals as they themselves would have told it to me, if face to face with me to-day, with the thought always in mind that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; that lives now and here can be as greatly enriched or as terribly hardened by contact with Him as in days of 2,000 years ago.

So the selections were made, and in this volume I present these personal stories to you just as I preached them to my own congregation. Their results were very gratifying to me. They brought about an increased interest in and enlarged attendance upon the services; also many and very sincere expressions of appreciation, and, at Easter, the largest number received into membership at one time in the forty years of the life of the church.

I send them forth with the hope that my brethren in the ministry may perhaps glimpse a novel but very effective method of presenting the old truths, but with the still larger hope that many of those who are already believers in and followers of the Master may be stimulated and strengthened in their faith, and that many who have never obeyed the command or accepted the invitation, "Follow Me," may be led to cast aside the implements or the equipment of the old life, to sit at the feet of Jesus and to learn from Him to use the tools so necessary and so full of promise for the new.

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I

THE SHEPHERD'S TALE OF THE GIFT UNSPEAKABLY PRECIOUS

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

"And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not: for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

"'For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord.

"'And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.'

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men.'

"And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, 'Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.'

"And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

"And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

"And all they that heard it, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds."

THEY KNEW JESUS

I

THE SHEPHERD'S TALE OF THE GIFT UNSPEAKABLY PRECIOUS

I HAVE come from a far-away land and a long-ago day to tell you once more the story that never grows old. Who I am does not matter. God did not seem to care to make it known, or He would have inspired one of the writers of His story to inscribe my name upon the imperishable page of Scripture. This He did not do, so I shall regard my lips as sealed; well content to be known simply as one of the shepherds who watched their flocks on the plains of Bethlehem on that memorable night two thousand years ago. I was born near this unimportant village—unimportant until the night of which I will speak—and of parents that were little known beyond their limited company of friends.

My father was a shepherd before me, and, very naturally, I followed in his footsteps. Nor have I ever felt ashamed of my occupation; for it was considered honorable by my nation, and I remember that the sweetest of Israel's singers, and the best loved of all her kings, was a shepherd before his anointing by Samuel to be our king; I remember that he roamed over these same plains at the head of his father's

flocks, and that by these very same paths which I daily followed, he led his sheep in search of food and drink. Instead of feeling ashamed of my occupation, I have felt exalted by it.

My nation was in a very unhappy situation. Israel, in my day, loved her liberty, as you, in your day, love your freedom. But an overwhelming force compelled us to bow our necks and bear the hated yoke of Rome. As if to humiliate us still further, Cæsar issued a decree which required every Israelite to appear in the village or city of his birth for the purpose of registering for taxation. So, for days, my companions and I had seen companies, large and small, journeying in all directions along the highways, hoping to reach their destinations by the appointed time.

Just the day before the time mentioned in the decree, we noticed pilgrims approaching from the north, a man and a woman, who attracted our attention more than other similar groups or individuals had, for several reasons. First, because of the difference in the ages of the two, the man being years the older. Second, because of the evidence, all too plain, of poverty. Third, because of the unusual beauty of the woman's face, which we saw when the wind blew aside her veil.

They stopped close beside us and asked for the shortest road to Bethlehem. Upon inquiry, we learned that they had come from Galilee, from the little and ill-reputed village of Nazareth, and that they were very weary from their journey. We invited them to rest for a time, as the journey was not long to Bethlehem, and the sun was yet several hours high. They readily accepted our invitation, seated themselves

among us, and partook with us of our frugal meal; they conversed awhile about Rome's oppression, and our hope for a deliverer, and, as evening approached, resumed their journey. The last we saw of them was when they stood, outlined against the evening sky, on the brow of the hill upon which Bethlehem is built.

Night came upon us rapidly, and we were under the necessity of hurrying to prepare our flocks for the night. Usually this was a task of only a few moments, at most, for the sheep were tired after the day's feeding; but on this night they were very restless, it seemed to us. In fact, we shepherds spoke to one another of our feeling that the air itself seemed to be surcharged with a peculiar quality that indicated something unusual—a storm, perhaps—impending.

At last, our task was completed, and, gathering about the fire, for the night was chill with the tang of winter, we ate our remaining bit of food, and talked again for a little while of our visitors of the afternoon, each of us speaking of the almost heavenly beauty of the woman's face; and after a little time, all fell asleep, except the one who stood watch.

How long we slept, I do not know. But suddenly, we all were wide awake, our hearts chilled by fear. We had noticed, and mentioned before we fell asleep, the marvelous beauty of the moonlight and the glow of the stars. Never had the heavens looked so wonderful to us. The new day had not yet dawned; we were sure of that, for some of us had not yet been called to take our turn as guard of the flocks; the moon had disappeared, and the stars had ceased to shine, yet it was almost as light as day about us!

Instead of the light of moon and stars, a glow strangely beautiful flooded the whole firmament and the plains about us. Terrified, we fell to the earth, not knowing what to expect; but at last we lifted our faces and glanced heavenward. There, in the center of this great hemisphere of light, stood the form of an angel, and again we fell to the earth in fear. But out from the sky there came a voice saying to us, "Fear not," and a strange, sweet peace swept away the terror that had gripped us. Again the words came: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people; for unto you, this day, in the city of David, is born a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find Him wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." By this time, we were again looking at him who had spoken to us, and with him we saw suddenly gathered a great company of the heavenly host, who lifted up their voices in the most beautiful music that was ever heard by mortal ear, and sang: "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH, PEACE, GOOD-WILL TO MEN."

With bowed heads we listened. With throbbing hearts we waited until they had finished singing. We were thrilled by the words that had been spoken and sung; for each of us realized that this was the message for which all Israel had waited for centuries.

The chorus and the lone messenger disappeared; the light, so glorious, waned; the moon and stars came forth from their places of hiding, again bathing the plain with light, and all things were as they had been before.

We stood for a little time, silent, no one of us knowing what to say or do, until at last I said to my companions: "Let us go even unto Bethlehem, and see whether these things be true." This thought must have been in the minds of all; for there was no other suggestion made, and we all started immediately for Bethlehem; not by the road followed by the caravan—that was too long—but by the narrow footpath leading down into the valley, and over the hill and across the plain. This brought us quickly to the village that was the least of all the cities of Judah's inheritance, yet the one of which the prophet had spoken large things when he said: "And thou, Bethlehem, of Ephratah, tho thou be least of the cities of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth who shall rule my people Israel."

We did not stop before any dwelling to inquire if within its doors there had just been born a babe. Neither did we stop at the Khan, where strangers usually found lodging; for the angel had said: "This shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

We felt sure that we knew the stable to which the angel referred, and we hurried through the streets until we came to the cave entrance, and, pushing through the open door, we made our way past the sheep and cattle until we came to the manger.

Here, to our great surprize, we found our visitors of the afternoon, the old man, and the woman of such surpassing beauty.

Now in her arms, clasped closely to her heart, was a little Child, new-born, and, as we looked into His face,

we knew that we were looking into the face of the only begotten Son of God.

How our hearts leaped within us as we realized—for none doubted—that every promise of God to His people Israel would find its fulfilment in and through this little Child! We fell upon our knees before Him and worshiped Him.

We could not understand why God had chosen us as the first of all mankind to look upon this scene, to hear these wonderful words, and to experience these strange things; but again and again I have since thanked God that I was led to become a shepherd, that I was born near Bethlehem, that I was with the flock on that memorable night, and that I had been counted worthy by Him to carry the message from the cave to the outer world, the message of a Saviour born unto mankind; for we went out that night and spread abroad the account of those things which we had both seen and heard.

Through all these years, I have never been able to forget the impression that was made upon me when I gazed into the face of that baby boy, while realizing that I was looking upon the face of the Son of God, who would bring such riches of grace into the world in His Father's good time.

Oh, yes, I saw Him in later life. One day Israel was startled by the appearance, in her midst, of a man clothed in the garments of a hermit, who cried out in a voice that rang clear and true with the earnestness of a prophet. Here and there he went, crying, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" From all parts of my country they came to hear him; for all seemed to

know that God had at last, after four hundred years of silence, spoken again to His people Israel. They thronged him, crying out, "What must I do? What must I do?" But one day, while this messenger was baptizing the penitents in the river Jordan, there came to him One of whom he bore a strange testimony: "This is He," he said, "of whom I spoke, saying, 'He must increase, but I must decrease; He is so much greater than I that I am not worthy to untie the thong of His sandals." And he baptized Him.

Bethlehem was not far from Jerusalem, and I often heard this child, now grown to manhood, speak. Always, He was followed by a multitude that hung upon His every word, and I heard them say again and again, after He had finished speaking to them, "Truly, this is the Son of God; for no man ever spoke as this man"; and, "He teaches us as one who has authority, not as we have been taught by the Scribes and Pharisees."

I saw Him many times after He began to minister to the miserable among men. I saw Him, at Jerusalem, touch the eyes of a man born blind, and give him his sight. I saw Him restore hearing to the deaf. I saw him touch the unclean flesh of the leper, and I saw the polluted tissue become as the flesh of a little child. I stood near to Bethany that day, with the group of mourners—for Mary and Martha and Simon were my friends—who stood about the tomb of Lazarus. I heard Him say to those near at hand, "Roll back the stone." I heard the protest of Mary, but saw the stone taken away, and then I heard Him say, "Lazarus, come forth," and I saw Lazarus come forth alive. And again, as I moved among those who had seen

what I had seen and heard what I had heard, I heard them saying, "It has never been so in Israel before; . . . can this be other than the Christ?"

I saw Him again, later by a little while. I was at the Feast of the Passover, of course. I was in the city of Jerusalem when Jesus entered in such majesty and triumph. I saw Him riding at the head of that great throng, whose members were waving palm branches and crying, "Hosannah, to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" I saw Him sweep into the city, and, riding to the Temple of our God, cleanse it of those who made it a place of merchandise and a den of thieves. I stood near Him when He spoke those never-to-be-forgotten words from the porch of the Temple, when with almost one voice the multitude cried, "This is the Christ!"

But I lived too close to the city to be in ignorance of the strong undercurrent of opposition that had been developed by the rulers of the people, who feared Him. I had learned the plans of the Sanhedrin to destroy Him, so I was not surprized, as were so many, at the strange turn in the tide that so soon took place.

On the day before the feast, I saw Him bound, and, after having been in the courts of Caiaphas and Annas, and declared guilty of blasphemy in both, led to Pilate's court and condemned to death by Israel's leaders. There I heard that awful cry, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" And the still more terrible judgment, self-pronounced, "His blood be upon us and on our children; . . . Away with Him! Away with Him!" I saw Him, bruised and beaten, bearing His cross, climb the hill outside the city gate. I saw them nail

Him to the cross. I saw Him suffer and die. Yes, I saw all this, nor did any of these terrible events fail to move me deeply; but as I look back upon them all, no one of them is stamped more clearly upon my memory, nor imbedded more deeply in my heart, than is the scene of thirty years before, when I looked into the face, the baby face, of Him who would save Israel from her sins.

Others may tell you, in their own way and at great length, if they will, the story of His remarkable life among men; for some were with Him many months as His disciples, His chosen ones. It will not be a complete story of His life, for no one individual can tell every incident in the life of the Son of God; but enough will be told, that he who reads it with open mind and heart will be convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was and is the only begotten Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

But I have come to you across the two thousand years of time to lead your minds and hearts, not to the cross by the steep and rugged path of sorrow and suffering, but, by the narrow sheep-path, down through the valleys, up over the hilltops, and across the even plain, to the cave in Bethlehem, to the manger, that you may look, as I did, into the face of the new-born Jesus, and worship Him as your Lord and King; that you may go forth from this presence into a world as greatly in need of the knowledge of such a Saviour as was the world of my day, and proclaim to every one whom you may meet that God so loved the world that He gave, in Jesus of Nazareth, His only be-

gotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

If you will follow me to the manger, and do as I did on that wonderful night; if you will help to publish abroad the glad good news, I will consider my journey from the far-away land and that long-ago day, and the telling again of the story that never grows old, not to have been in vain.

II

JOHN THE BAPTIST, THE FORERUNNER OF THE CHRIST

"There was, in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the Course of Abiah; and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass that he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course. According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

"And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled and great fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, 'Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife, Elisabeth, shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth; for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, and many of the Children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.'

"There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same came for a witness to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light."

II

JOHN THE BAPTIST, THE FORERUNNER OF THE CHRIST

I AM a prisoner in Herod's prison because of my public denunciation of his shameful, sinful life. How long I shall remain I do not know, but, while here, apart from the multitudes who listened so eagerly to my message, the burden of which was, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," I have had time to recall and ponder over the years from my birth to the day of my imprisonment; yes, I have been thinking, too, of the days before my birth, from the time that the angel messenger appeared to my father in the Temple at Jerusalem, to tell him that his empty heart and the childless home of my mother would be changed by my coming.

I have found this meditation profitable and pleasant, and I want to tell you of those early years; of my preparation for my service to Jehovah, as a prophet, heralding the coming of the Christ, and of that service itself.

My father, Zacharias, and my mother, Elisabeth, were both of the tribe of Levi. My father was a priest in the Temple at Jerusalem, serving in the course of Abiah, his particular task being the burning of incense in the golden censer in the Holy Place, while the people outside the sacred enclosure bowed themselves in prayer. It was while so engaged that he was granted

a vision, in which he saw an angel, Gabriel by name, standing close beside the altar, who assured him of his own and my mother's acceptance with Jehovah, and then declared that their prayers for a child, so long unanswered, would be answered as they desired; that a son would be born to them in that period of life when such an event was deemed impossible; for both my father and my mother had grown old. The angel informed them concerning me, saying that I would be a bearer of joy, not only to them, but to many others; that I would be filled with the Holy Spirit, and that because of me, many in Israel would turn to the Lord; that I would make ready my people for the coming of the Messiah.

My father was astonished at these words, was lacking in faith, and asked for a sign as proof that the words spoken and the events foretold would come true. Gabriel replied that the sign asked for would be given him—that he would be unable to speak aloud henceforth until the day of my birth.

As suddenly as he had appeared, he departed. My father had remained so long in the Holy Place that the worshipers wondered at the delay; but at last he appeared to dismiss them, and, unable to speak, he dismissed them with a wave of the hand. This impediment rendered him incapable of service in the Temple, and as quickly as possible, he returned to his home in Galilee, where he informed my mother of all that had occurred in Jerusalem, and she was overjoyed.

When I was born, the question of a name was discussed by their friends, but God had saved my parents this usually pleasant task, by Himself giving me a

name, which Gabriel communicated to my father at the time of the vision. My mother stated that my name should be John, but her friends argued that I should be named for my father, objecting that the name John was not a family name. My father was then appealed to, and, calling for writing material, for he could not as yet speak, wrote "His name shall be called John." This ended the controversy, and it was then that my father's voice was restored to him, and his first words were a hymn of praise, not lacking the prophetic element concerning me, causing those who heard him to wonder, and to ask themselves what manner of child I would be.

Let me say here, that I have been deeply impressed again and again, in these hours of meditation, with the thought of the very great blessing that was mine in being born into a home where God was consciously and conscientiously worshiped. Both of my parents, as I have said, were of that tribe which, in the early day of our national life, had been set aside by God for the service in the temple; the tribe which was given no separate heritage in the Land of Canaan, that its members might not be cumbered with the usual cares of the landholder, in order that they might give their whole time to the service of the Tabernacle, and, later, of the Temple. They appreciated these privileges, and were much given to praise and to prayer. I say this not only because of my own recollection, but because of the testimony of others who knew them well. Perhaps I did not value this blessing in my childhood years, but I recognize its worth now, and wish to bear witness to its value to me.

If it is Herod's pleasure to release me, and to give me the privilege of speaking other messages to Israel, I assure you that I will speak to my countrymen of this, and, with the voice that so recently caused Israel to pause and think, and repent and confess, and reform, I will declare, with all my God-given power, that no man and woman have a right to bring into the world a child without providing beforehand for him, and bestowing upon him, after his coming, the most priceless heritage; namely, a godly example and training, a home in which God is honored above all else, an atmosphere so saturated with the spirit of holiness and consecration to God, that the child must be filled with the Spirit of God from the day of his birth. I will declare also, with all my God-given eloquence, that one who is not a parent has no right to set before children who are not his own, an example less godly than he would wish to have his own children follow, if God should bless him with parenthood.

I grew rapidly and ruggedly to manhood, but, when about twenty years of age, I began to feel within me a strong yearning for a life different from the life of the young men of my day. The things which interested them had no attraction for me. I wanted to get away where I might think, without interruption, of the things of which I had been told by my parents; things contained in the conversation between Gabriel and my father in the Temple; things concerning me and my work. So, little by little, I formed the habit of going out into the unpopulated portions of the country near my home, out into the solitary places where no one would be seen, maybe, for days at a time. This

suited me well, and I spent days in quiet, unbroken meditation, and often, as I thought, I would become conscious of the fact that I had been speaking my thoughts out loud. I was surprized at this, and sometimes not a little worried; but after a time it became quite natural, and I ceased to worry. I felt frequently an impulse in my spiritual nature, much like, I imagine, what Samson felt in his physical nature when God entered into him and made him a mighty deliverer.

Those words, "He shall be great," "He shall turn many from their sins," surged into my consciousness again and again, until, after a while, I found myself going farther and farther into the open country in search of some spot where I might find still more seclusion and enjoy more and more this secret communion with Jehovah. At last I found the place toward which my feet had been guided, and I entered into a cave, large enough for all my needs, near to whose entrance ran a stream that would furnish me abundance of water for all my necessities, while a screen of young trees and underbrush hid the entrance from the possible passer-by.

Here I found the contentment for which I had searched. I returned to my home, and gathered together such clothing and equipment as I needed. I told my parents of my plan, and acquainted them with the location of my cloister, in case they should need me or want me. No objection was offered by them, for they saw that God was working His will in me, and they were content to let Him do His work in His own way.

In a few days I was back again at the cave, and then

there began a most happy experience covering about ten years. My wants were very few. I secured the needed clothing by using the skins of beasts that could be cheaply purchased. My food was simple, but substantial. No time was wasted in unessential things, and into my life, in a constant stream, there flowed those forces that were to mold me after God's own pattern. My voice grew strong in the open air, and my spirit kept pace with my body and voice. Much of the time I was in prayer, and more than once I was conscious of the very presence of God with me. I heard His voice, as He spoke to me of what I should say, when, at last, fully prepared for it, He would drive me from my wilderness retreat, back into the life that I had forsaken, to begin my great task of turning Israel back to Him, and of proclaiming the immediate appearance of the Messiah.

Months afterward I passed through another strange spiritual experience. I could interpret it in just one way. The time was at hand! I left my refuge without regret at parting from it. I found myself hurrying toward the cities in which men were living. I could with difficulty restrain my desire to cry out, even when no one was near to hear my words. At last, familiar villages were recognized, and, as I found myself near enough to be heard by the people who were moving lazily through the streets, I could not hold myself in check, but began to speak. I had no carefully prepared speech, but depended upon God for the words that would carry His message to the hearts of the people.

My appearance must have been striking; no soft garments, but a camel-skin cloak reaching to my knees;

without tunic or turban; my hair long and flowing; my face unshaven. It was not this, however, but rather the words that I spoke, that caused the people to stop in the streets, to run from their homes and the market-place, to crowd about me. I heard myself crying out, as I passed through the streets of the cities, just as Jonah, the prophet of the Lord, did in Nineveh hundreds of years before: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. . . . All flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord!" For almost five hundred years no word had been spoken to Israel by a prophet of Jehovah, but instantly my countrymen recognized in me such a messenger and followed me about from place to place. Can you imagine my feelings when I saw the literal fulfilment of the promise of God, "He shall turn many of his people to their God"? For, as I spoke, men and women fell on their knees before me and cried out, "What must I do? What must I do? . . . How may I repent? . . . How may I find God?"

I spared no one. Ruler, soldier, slave, master, man or woman or child, all were told plainly of their sins, and warned to repent and be baptized that they might be ready for the kingdom and for the King, when He should appear. I chose the regions round about the River Jordan for my field of labor, and using water from the stream I baptized, with the baptism of repentance, all who came to me.

For days they came, and for days I spoke to them and baptized. I went almost without food or rest or

sleep, yet I was not wearied, nor was I conscious of the need of rest.

But one day stands out from among the rest, as the sun stands apart from the lesser lights of the heavens. I was speaking, as usual, and baptizing, when there appeared One in the throng who seemed strangely familiar, and yet He was not one of those who had been often in the crowds about me day after day. He approached me, and listened intently to what I was saying. Something within me warned me that this One was no ordinary visitor. He came close and asked me to baptize Him. Again I had that strange feeling within. A voice told me that I was greatly inferior to Him who stood so near me, and, in reply to His request for baptism, I said, "It is more fitting that I should be baptized of thee, than that thou shouldest be baptized by me." But He said, "Suffer it to be so now." And I baptized Him.

I knew instantly why I had felt so strangely, and why I had felt so in need in His presence; for as He stood before me, the water of baptism still upon Him, the heavens opened, and I saw a white dove come out of the far distance, and fly about over our heads for a little time, and then settle down upon Him, and remain upon Him. I was astonished at this strange occurrence. Then I recalled words that had been spoken to me out in the cave in the wilderness: "The spirit, like a dove, will be seen by you to descend and abide upon a Man, after you have baptized Him. This One will be the Promised Deliverer, the Christ, the Redeemer." As I stood speechless before Him, still wondering, both the multitude and I heard a voice from heaven

saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." I recognized the voice. I had often heard it in those ten years in the wilderness cave. I knew that God was telling me that this One before whom I was standing, was the One for whom Israel had been looking, and hoping, and praying since the promise to Abraham: "In thee and in thy seed, shall all nations of the earth be blessed."

I was deeply interested also because, while I had never seen Him, we were related through our mothers. His mother had visited my mother a few months before I was born, just after she had been told of her exaltation by God to be the mother of the Christ. Our homes were not so far apart, but we had never met before this day.

As quietly as He had come, He withdrew from the banks of the Jordan, and I resumed my work.

Reports of my labor had been made to the leaders of the nation, and they came to me, and also sent deputations to me, to ask me who I was; whether I was the Christ, or no. To all of these queries I made truthful answer: "I am not the Christ, but I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, this my God-given message: There is now One among you, who is so much greater than I am, that I am not worthy to untie the string that binds the sandal to His feet—One whom you have not yet recognized, but One whom you will both see and hear."

Naturally, some of the younger men attached themselves to me. It was quite the custom then for a teacher, or Rabbi, to have a following of students, who looked to him for instruction. I was a young man,

just about thirty, and my enthusiasm won a number of about my own age to me, who called themselves my disciples. I baptized them and instructed them, teaching them to pray as I had come to understand praying. Among these were two young men named John and Andrew. They were always eager to learn, and most devout, and devoted to me. I loved them both.

About a month after I had baptized the One, word came to me that He too was preaching, and that multitudes were attending Him. In fact, some of my own disciples came to me not a little disturbed by the fact that the crowds were turning to Him, and away from me; but I was not troubled by this, and said to them, "God has shown me that my work is to *prepare* the way for Him, and when I have finished my task to God's satisfaction, He will increase in popular favor, while I will decrease." I was at great peace, and was unspeakably glad that I had had a part in His redeeming work.

A little later, I was standing near the Jordan River with a group of my disciples. Looking down the river path, I saw the One whom I had baptized, approaching us, and I pointed Him out to my followers, and said to them: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. . . . This is the One who, I told you, was certain to eclipse me in the favor of the people. . . . That One yonder is none other than the Son of God. There can be no mistake about it; for God has clearly told me so." The next day I saw Him again, and once more I declared Him to be the Christ, and the two of my disciples whom I loved the best, John and Andrew, left me to follow Him, and I never

saw them again. But I was glad for them, that they were to be close to Him whose coming I had been privileged to announce.

Not long after this incident Herod, angered, as I have said, because I had publicly denounced his shameless, sinful life, arrested me and cast me into his prison, whose doors have never opened to release me.

My disciples have visited me frequently, but few if any others have remembered me or my message, and I have been much alone. If I could return to my refuge in the wilderness, I would be content; but this place is so different from that! The air is foul, and I feel so hemmed in that I can hardly breathe. No sunshine ever filters in, and the food is insufficient, and so unclean that I can scarce eat it. The guards are insolent, and the soldiers insulting. I admit that I miss the throngs that thrilled me, and that thrilled to my preaching. I try to adjust myself to these changed conditions, but the effort is in vain. My soul is troubled within me. I was engaged in a work that was not of my choosing; God called me to it, and prepared me for it. I spent years of my life in getting ready for it, and, after a few brief months, it was brought to an abrupt close, and I was cast into this prison, where my voice can not be heard in the great world.

Reports came to me some time ago of the increasing popularity of the Christ, but He did not come to see me, nor did He send me any message.

Day after day I had sat and thought of all that had occurred. In fact, I found myself brooding over these startling and most unhappy changes, which seemed so undeserved. Deeper and deeper into the valley I de-

scended, until the darkness of doubt and despair completely enveloped me, and I found myself questioning everything that had occurred in my life. I began to doubt the truth of the story often told me by my parents about my birth. I asked, "Is this the greatness to which I was to attain?" I found myself doubting those experiences in the wilderness, when I thought that God was speaking to me, and into my heart there came the haunting fear that maybe, after all, the voice I thought I had heard so often and so clearly, was but the mutterings of a disordered brain; that I had not been listening to anything else than the voice of my own distorted imagination. I feared that I had been mad, and was still mad. I could not, by any process of thought, reconcile all of that with this miserable reversal.

I was willing that my work should be less striking in results than His. I was willing that He should increase, and that I should diminish; but this imprisonment was such a shock to me that I found myself rebellious and bitter exceedingly.

One day, some of my disciples came to me. It was on a day when I was more deeply depressed than usual, and I said to them: "You must render me a service. I want you to go to the One whom I baptized; to the One whom I pointed out to you as the Lamb of God, the Son of God, and ask Him the question that has so often been presenting itself to me, here in prison. I want you to ask Him plainly, 'Art thou the Christ, or must we wait longer and hope again, until another is sent from God?' "

They went away, and again I was alone, with my

faith daily assaulted by doubt and darkness. They remained away many days, until I began to wonder if they too had forgotten and deserted me in their enthusiasm for the new Teacher. But one day they came, and as I looked into their faces I knew what answer they would give me when they were permitted to speak. I was so glad to see them, and I begged them to tell me at once of their experience. And they told me. They had found the Messiah, and had seen the great multitudes surrounding Him constantly. They could not reach Him to ask Him my question until late in the evening of the second day, but they spent the intervening time in asking the multitudes what they thought of Him. They learned that all but the Scribes and Pharisees and Priests were agreed that He was the Christ. Everywhere they heard of miracles that He had performed; and there was an enthusiasm for Him that was simply wonderful.

At last they were alone with Him and the disciples, and they asked Him my question, telling Him who had sent them to ask it, and informing Him of my unhappy fate. He listened to them, but made no immediate answer. In fact, He seemed much preoccupied all through the evening, but in the morning He took them with Him, keeping them close to Him that they might not miss anything He said or did. As they told me the story of those days, their zeal increased until their words rushed over one another in eagerness to be spoken.

Evidently thinking of me, but delaying His answer, He healed a leper; He opened the eyes of the blind; He unstopped the ears of the deaf; He gave back

speech to the dumb. My disciples paid close attention to the multitude about Him, and discovered that in it there were not many of the rich, nor many of the mighty; but there were many who were of the middle class, and many of the poor. To their surprize, one day in His talk He asked the crowd what they had thought of me (John); what they had gone out into the wilderness to see when they had heard my voice—a reed shaken by the wind; a man dressed in the fine raiment of the court clique, or a prophet? And then, my disciples told me, He declared that they who had gone out expecting to see a prophet of the Lord had not been disappointed; for they had not only seen *a* prophet, but they had seen *the greatest* prophet ever born of woman. My disciples were greatly pleased, and when they told this to me, my own heart felt a joy that it had not known for a long, long time.

When His day's work was ended, He came to them and bade them return at once to me, and tell me what things they had seen and heard, and that they should say to me: "He is greatly blessed who does not find occasion of offense in me." And so they came back to me, and the doubt that had so dimmed my faith was dissipated, and I was satisfied that no other Saviour would ever be sent from God to Israel or to the world, but the One whose coming I had heralded.

I am not sure but that the words of Jesus contained a rebuke for me, and if there was rebuke in them, I think it was deserved. I had been so certain, so positive, and such multitudes had accepted my words as true, that for such a question to be asked of Him by me, was not as it should be. But the stimulus of the

throng, the thrill of a great mission, and the conviction born of deep meditation and of continuous seclusion with God, sometimes do not produce the strength needed to stand up under long-continued suffering, disappointment and disaster. With all the preparation that preceded my appearance, I was not strong enough to stand up under the stress of such reverses as had been mine.

I know now, and I felt then, that I was wrong to doubt or give way; that all those wonderful days with God, in the happiness of preparation, could not be meaningless or profitless to me; that God would not so treat one of His children. But here about me are walls, here is complete solitude, here is wanting every evidence of success, and here is the presence of every proof of failure. Here, too, is the opportunity for the tempter to work to the greatest advantage in his attempt to undermine my confidence. The strain was too great, and I gave way.

The Master was right. He is not and can not be truly happy who allows doubt and misfortune to shake his faith in Him.

The Master was right. He alone is truly happy who recognizes, accepts, trusts in, and confesses Him to be the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, the Son of God, the Christ, the Redeemer.

The Master was right. He alone is happy, in the highest sense, who finds God's place for him, and fills it; God's part for him, and performs it, in the divine plan to redeem the world from sin through His only begotten Son.

The Master was right. Happy is he who finds no ground for rejecting Him.

Herod has called me many times into his presence and talked with me. He has asked me many, many questions, and I have been told that his life has changed in many ways for the better.

If he shall determine that death is my portion, then I will meet death with courage, confident that the Christ has indeed come, and that the world will recognize Him and revere Him; and that the time will come of which another of God's prophets has spoken, the time when every knee shall bend before Him, and when every tongue shall confess that He is the Christ, to the glory of God the Father.

I wish that I might have had a larger part in bringing in this wonderful day; in fulfilling the great prophecy concerning His final triumph. But every one can have a part, even tho it be a small one. For every one can hasten the coming of that day and that triumph by bowing his own knee reverently before Him, and by confessing his own faith in Him as the Christ of God before the world so much in need of the salvation that He alone can bring.

III

ANDREW, AN AVERAGE DISCIPLE WITH AN UNUSUAL EXPERIENCE

"Again, the next day after, John stood with two of his disciples; and, looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, 'Behold the Lamb of God!' And the two heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and saith unto them, 'What seek ye?' They said unto Him, 'Rabbi, where dwellest thou?' He saith unto them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

"He first findeth his own brother, Simon, and saith unto him, 'We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.'

"And he brought him to Jesus."

III

ANDREW, AN AVERAGE DISCIPLE WITH AN UNUSUAL EXPERIENCE

I WAS born in the beautiful village of Bethsaida, at the northern end of the Sea of Galilee, named "The Place of Fish" because of the enormous schools of fish that were attracted thither by the rush of water from the near-by hot springs into the sea, which tempered the waters to their liking. The Sea of Galilee in my day was regarded as one of the most beautiful, if not the most beautiful known to man. Its shores sloped gradually to the water's edge, making every labor connected with the fishing industry easy to perform—the landing of heavy catches, the washing of the nets, and the curing of the fish. Its waters were clear and free from contamination, and at times so calm as to be like the surface of a highly polished mirror, reflecting, as you approached from the sea, the many little villages nestling among the oleander trees, almost always in bloom, so as to present a marvelously beautiful picture. Yet it was treacherous, too; for the many valleys reaching down almost to the sea would sometimes, without warning, send out tornado-like storms that made the sea a most dangerous foe to any one caught far from the land. But we loved it in spite of its moods, and it was a very generous friend to those who depended for their living upon it.

In my early years I was just about as much in and upon the water as I was upon the land. The children of that day were very much like the children of all ages, largely imitators of their elders, and our games were largely childish imitation of the occupations of our parents. We sailed our boats, caught and marketed our fish, and had great sport in the shallow waters close to shore. While I was still a lad, my father took me with him on fishing trips, along with Simon, my brother, who was older than I by some years. These rare outings were the delight of my life. When I grew to manhood, my father was well along in years, and gradually turned his fishing interests over to Simon and me. It was hard work, and not without its real dangers, but it was very profitable.

I had no other thought than to continue in the business. Simon had his home here and we seemed to be firmly and profitably established.

One morning while we were busy washing our nets after the night's catch, a man who had been across the sea to the neighborhood of Bethabara created no little excitement by telling us of the appearance there, and the preaching, of a man named John, called "the Baptist," whom multitudes declared to be a prophet of Jehovah. No prophet had spoken to Israel for centuries now, and the feeling was general that, if this one was a prophet, God must be about to fulfil some promise already made or to speak a promise that would be fulfilled in the future years. That He was speaking again to Israel was a great satisfaction after so long a silence.

The day following his visit, several boats put out

from the shore without nets or fishing crews. The men were dressed not for toil, but as tho they were on their way to Jerusalem at the feast times. They announced that they were going to the other side of the sea, where this prophet was supposed to be making his headquarters, and where the multitudes were receiving baptism at his hands, to see for themselves and to judge for themselves of the truth of the report.

Several days passed, and then we saw their boats approaching the shore, and when they were close enough to be seen distinctly, we were aware of the presence of a subdued excitement that could have but one meaning. Almost before they had stepped from the boats, they had made their enthusiastic declarations that they were convinced that John was a prophet from Jehovah, and that they themselves had accepted baptism at his hands, while many of Israel had also been led to repentance under his preaching.

I was very greatly interested, and decided to go to Bethabara and hear him. Simon was not so much interested, and decided not to go with me. My father consented to take my place in the crew for the few days that I expected to be away, and I eagerly set out on my journey. I heard John speak frequently, and was deeply moved by his message. I asked him to baptize me, and he consented, and I was richly blessed. I decided to extend my stay, and sent word to my home that I would remain longer than I had intended, and instructed Simon to secure some one to take my place in the boats. In the throngs were a number of young men whom I joined, and we became known as John's disciples.

The multitudes kept coming from all parts of the country, and the interest in his words became more and more intense, especially as he emphasized the establishment of the kingdom and the coming of the King.

We were listening closely to him one morning when he paused and seemed unable to find words to continue. His eyes were fixed on some one who was approaching him, one who had not been among those who had attended him day after day, but one who impressed us all, as we turned our eyes toward John's objective. He made his way through the crowd until he stood just in front of John. For a moment no word was spoken by either; then the stranger asked to be baptized by him. He objected that it was more fitting that he should receive baptism at the stranger's hand than that he should administer baptism to him. But the applicant insisted, and was baptized. A very strange thing then occurred. From the distant heavens there came toward us a dove, white as snow and very beautiful. It circled about for a moment or two above our heads, and settled down upon this newcomer, and remained upon him for a time, and then disappeared. This was most unusual, but while we were wondering what it might mean, and who he was who stood in our midst, there came a voice from that same distant point, and we heard distinctly the words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We saw no one, and were greatly perplexed. But in a few moments the stranger withdrew as quietly as he had come, and John again began to speak, and our attention was centered in him.

It was some weeks later that John and several of us were standing not far from the water's edge. The day was far spent, and the crowds had left us alone for a little while. Not so far from us, walking leisurely in the beaten path, we saw the one who had been baptized by John; the one who had been heralded by the unseen speaker as His well-beloved son. Turning to us, and speaking in tones that always were used by him when most intensely in earnest, John said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Night came quickly, and we went to our places of rest, to meet again at about the same spot in the morning.

Among these young men who, with me, followed John, was one from Capernaum, the village next to my own. Like myself, he was a fisherman, and he was of about my own age. His name also was John, a son of Zebedee.

As the days passed, we formed a very close friendship. We talked much of what we had seen and heard, and wondered whether all that John the Baptist had said would come true. We agreed that, if the Kingdom had actually come and the King was at hand, great and happy days were in store for our beloved land and people. That night, after we had separated from our teacher, we two pondered over the few words that he had spoken just a little while before—"Behold the Lamb of God!"—and wondered why they had been spoken of this stranger, and what he had meant.

The next morning we met, as we had agreed, near the river, and again the stranger of the night before was seen approaching us. Once more in the same words

John spoke to us of Him—"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

We all loved John dearly, but something inside of us told us to follow the stranger, and, as He passed us, we fell in behind Him and followed. We did not approach Him at once, but as we journeyed along, unconsciously, our desire had increased our pace, and soon we were quite close to Him. He turned and spoke to us, asking us what we wanted. We were greatly confused, for we had formulated no form of address or request, so the first words that occurred to us were spoken. "Master," we said, "where dwellest thou?" He answered, "Come and see." He turned and walked on, and we continued to follow until we came to the village which seemed to be the end of His journey. He asked us to break bread with Him. We were very happy to do so, and after the meal was ended we sat and talked with Him for a long time, asking Him many questions, particularly what John had meant when he had spoken of Him as the Lamb of God that had come to take away the sins of the world. He was very patient with us, answering every question that we asked, and as He talked on and on, we both noticed the very marked difference between John's teaching and His, both as to method and as to content.

We saw everything clearly now. I can not describe to you the feeling within us. Our minds seemed to have been enlarged greatly; our hearts were beating as tho they would burst from our bodies, and there came to each of us a spiritual exaltation that simply can not be described. We were just lifted up and up until it seemed to us that we were in the very presence of God.

Night had now come, and John and I left Him with great reluctance. When morning came, my first thought was of Simon, my brother and partner. I had been away from home now for weeks, and had little desire to return to the old life upon the sea, for I was convinced that in this stranger we had found the Christ, the promised Messiah for whom we had looked and longed and prayed so earnestly. And I wanted Simon to share with me this great joy. I hurried home to Capernaum. Just as soon as I could do so, I told Simon and all who would listen to me, all that had occurred while I had been with John the Baptist, and particularly my experience with the Lamb of God, Jesus, as they called Him. All listened, but Simon was not easy to persuade. At last I convinced him sufficiently to secure his consent to visit Him at once. We started on our journey and together hurried to the village where I had left Him, and here we found Him. He was so easy of approach that I at once led Simon into His presence, and when He saw my brother, He said, even before I could tell Him who he was, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas; thou shalt henceforth be called Cephas." (This meant "a stone.")

Simon, as I had been, was convinced very quickly by Jesus, and we remained with Him for several days. The little company was soon increased by the addition of our friend and neighbor, Philip, whom Jesus invited to join us. Philip was as easily persuaded of the great truth concerning Jesus as we had been, and immediately left for Cana in Galilee, where he had a friend named Nathanael. Just as I had gained Simon, so Philip gained Nathanael. He had a little trouble at

first to convince his friend that the Messiah, of whom Moses and the Prophets had written, could come from the miserable village of Nazareth; but he refused to spend time in quibbling, assuring his friend that if he would only meet Jesus, he too would be fully persuaded that no mistake had been made, and that the Messiah was at hand. It was just as he had said, for when Nathanael met Jesus there was no delay, no question asked; he simply accepted Him as the Christ. We were a happy group. We were particularly glad to have Nathanael added to our number, for he was a student and his acceptance of Jesus strengthened greatly our own faith. After a few more days with Jesus, we separated and returned to our homes and to our neglected business.

We had been back upon the sea a few weeks, when, one day, as we were attending to the daytime tasks upon the shore, Jesus approached and watched us at our work, passing from group to group.

Finally He stood close to where we were working on our nets, washing and mending them. When we had finished, He said to Simon and me: "Come ye after me, and I will cause you to become fishers of men." We immediately left our boats and followed. He went on a little way and stopped near where John and James were laboring, and asked them to go with Him, and they, too, left their father and their boats and followed Him. Others were added as the days went by. For one of these new disciples we cared very little, as we knew him well—Matthew, the despised tax-gatherer; we asked no questions and uttered no protest, but he knew that we were not overjoyed by his

presence among us. The number at last reached twelve, all but one, Judas, having been chosen from Galilee. Judas came from Kerioth, in Judea. Why Jesus invited no more was not made known to us, but He made no further additions. From this time on, we were with Him much of the time.

I had thought that great throngs had followed John the Baptist, and that these had listened intently, breathlessly to his preaching; but the multitudes who had gathered about him were not to be compared with the numbers that thronged about Jesus wherever He went, nor had we ever seen such intense interest as that shown in His teaching. When He would cease speaking, the crowd would break up into smaller companies, and these would discuss what He had said or done, and in almost every instance the unanimous judgment was that this was indeed the Christ, the Restorer. We were greatly interested in what they thought of our Rabbi, so we mixed with these groups very often, were thrilled by their words of acknowledgment, and frequently reported what we had heard to Jesus. John the Baptist had performed no miracles, confining himself wholly to proclaiming his message of repentance, and calling upon the people to prepare for the coming of the King. But Jesus amazed every one by His power over both nature and the ills of men. By word or touch, the impossible was accomplished with ease. Lepers in large numbers were cleansed, the sick were healed of whatever malady they had, the dead were brought back to life. The storm-tossed sea was stilled by a word, the hungry were fed with bread

that had been marvelously multiplied under His hand. Oh, I can not tell you all that He did!

When the people saw these things, they were still more firmly persuaded that this was the Promised One, and that John the Baptist had been right when he had declared Him to be the coming Deliverer. Frequently we heard some one question the fact of His leadership, and their doubt was always met by the question, "Will the One whom God will send, if this one is not He, be able to do greater things than this one has done?" Usually, this settled the dispute. More than once, after one of His great healings, the people cried out: "We have never seen such things in Israel as we are now seeing almost every day."

Our nation was under Rome's dominion. Pilate, the Procurator, was hated most cordially by every child of Abraham; and in our hearts burned the hope, which had become almost a conviction, that soon, very soon, Jesus would break Rome's yoke from off our necks.

Pilate was not without fear of trouble, for very frequently we saw soldiers listening closely to what Jesus said, and moving among the people gathered about us.

We were surprized at the absence of the members of the Sanhedrin, the Priests and the Scribes and Pharisees, but we supposed that their absence was due to their feeling that the time was not yet ripe for them to come openly to His support. We were convinced that they would support Him heartily when the people had been sufficiently aroused and enthused to justify an open break with Rome. Until that time should come,

they would look coldly upon the movement in order to allay suspicion.

We all began to draw mental pictures of the restored Kingdom of Israel, and the God-crowned King. We felt justified in assuring ourselves places of leadership in the new Israel, because we were the very first to join the movement. This practise was perfectly harmless until we began to discuss our *relative* rank in the kingdom. Then trouble began. Judas was claiming the right to collect taxes. Others of us made our claims, and tried to justify their making, and very soon we were so embittered that we would hardly speak to one another, and we certainly wasted much valuable time in argument.

This situation was brought to a climax by the appearance in our company of the mother of James and John, who boldly asked of Jesus that these sons of hers might sit on the right and left side of His throne, when He should really come into possession of His kingdom. The rest of us were simply furious. Something had to be done, and done quickly, and Jesus did the needful thing. He called to Him one of several children who were playing near us, and, taking him in His arms, said: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

That quieted the matter for a time, but only for a time, for strife broke out again furiously as we were going to Jerusalem to eat what proved to be the last Passover Feast that we celebrated with Jesus. We

were so angry at this time that we could not even be courteous to Jesus, and once more He met the crisis—this time in a way that settled it forever. We had gone to the room prepared for us, and had rudely taken our places at the table, no one of us offering to remove, by washing, the dust of the journey from the feet of Jesus. We did not even remove it from our own feet. Jesus could not proceed with what He had to say to us while this envy remained in our hearts; so, rising from the table and girding Himself with a towel, He took a basin of water and passing behind us washed our feet and dried them, returning to His place at the table. We had been taught a lesson that we could not forget. Even Simon was humbled.

I spoke of Jesus' miracles a little while ago. I must tell you of one that came near to precipitating a revolution, the long-expected outbreak against Rome. We were out on the hillside, where Jesus had taken us for a little rest and quiet talk. But we were discovered or recognized by a large number of our people going up to the feast at Jerusalem. They turned aside from the highway and climbed the hillside and sat down on the grass about us, and waited for Jesus to speak. He never missed an opportunity to speak, especially where there was a real desire to hear Him.

There were about five thousand men, besides women and children, in the company. If they had continued their journey, they would have found food and accommodations; but they stopped, and their store of food had been consumed. They remained till late in the afternoon and seemed to forget entirely their need and the impossibility of securing food so far from a village or

city. We had noticed it and called the attention of Jesus to the approaching night and the necessity for sending them away. But He was not disposed to dismiss them so abruptly. Instead, He turned to us and said, "Give ye them to eat." We were simply amazed. We had not expected to remain so long ourselves; for we had brought no lunch with us. The only food that was in the company was the small lunch of a boy that had come with us, and it consisted of but five small cakes and a few dried fish.

I mentioned this to Jesus, but asked, "What is this among so many? Two hundred pennyworth of bread, if it could be secured, would not be enough to give every one more than a bite; but we can not secure such a supply, and we have not the price." He said, "Seat the people in convenient companies." This was done, and then He took the loaves and the fish, blessed them, and handed them to us, bidding us to give them to the people. We began to break off portions, when, to our amazement, we found that our hands were never empty. We went on breaking, and the people took from our hands bread and meat, and ate until satisfied. After they were through, we gathered up twelve baskets full of fragments—more, by far, than our supply when we started out.

The crowd recalled an old promise—that God would send them one like unto Moses, and they felt that they had recognized this one in Jesus, because, as Moses had given them manna in the wilderness and Jesus had given them bread here in unlimited supply, there was no reason to wait longer or look farther; and they attempted to take Him and by force make

Him king. This Jesus refused to allow them to do, and withdrew from their midst, going to the other side of the sea during the night.

We now began to see Scribes and Pharisees and Priests in the crowds about Jesus, as well as the soldiers, and we wondered if the time had come when they felt that it would be safe for them to favor Jesus openly. We were very sure that this was true, and our hopes rose high. You may imagine my surprize when one of the Scribes interrupted Jesus with a question asked in a tone that was far from friendly. But again we thought that this was for effect, an effort to allay any suspicion that might still be in Pilate's mind; for a soldier stood close by. We thought that it was a rather shrewd move. We ought to have known better, for Jesus had very early in our association with Him, and at frequent intervals later, spoken to us of the opposition that would become more and more bitter until it would result in His death upon the cross; but we all felt that Simon was right—simply had to be right—when he said, "Lord, far be these things from thee; they can never befall the Messiah." This was one instance where selfish ambition burned too brightly to let even the truth dim it.

These interruptions from the crowd became of frequent occurrence, and their hostility was not assumed, but real. Such statements as "He casteth out demons through His league with Beelzebub, the prince of devils," were hard to harmonize with our thought of their scheme to deceive Pilate. Then, too, the crowds grew smaller, and for weeks Jesus spoke not at all.

Still He healed the sick and cleansed lepers, and opened the eyes of the blind.

One day He called the twelve and more than fifty others from among those who had been closely attending Him, and said to us: "I am unable to reach, with my message, all who ought to hear. I must send you out with power to speak and to heal as I have done. Waste no time in social enjoyment. Hurry, cover the whole land, speaking only to the House of Israel, and when you have finished, meet me here and make your reports." We went out two by two; Simon and I went together, and James and John were also paired. Because of his greater ability, my brother spoke while I healed. It was a wonderful experience. To speak, and see men who had long been helpless leap to their feet; to touch, and see the instant change from blindness to sight; to speak, and find men so moved and convinced that they would make open acknowledgment of their acceptance of our Master—these were thrilling experiences. We obeyed our instructions, and after several months had passed, we were making our way back to the appointed meeting place. Our enthusiasm and our reports greatly heartened Jesus. The entire company of seventy at last were gathered about Him, and the reports were of one type only. Everywhere the people had received us gladly.

And then a most unlooked-for, a most unusual thing occurred. Jesus spoke to us and to a large company who had gathered, of His being the "Bread of Life," insisting that those who would live forever must eat of this bread, adding: "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." The Jews about us

were openly antagonistic, and this spirit spread even among the seventy who had just returned from such an unusual excursion, and all of them, except the twelve, turned from Him and deserted Him, and never returned to the faith nor to following. It was the most striking reversal that I had ever seen. No longer could we deceive ourselves. The Scribes, Pharisees, Priests were not pretending to oppose, but were actually plotting to put Jesus to death.

More frequently than before they plied Him with questions that were deeply involved and involving—questions that it seemed could not be answered by Jesus without incurring either the rejection of Him by our nation or the suspicion and prosecution of Rome. Questions of tribute and many others were propounded, and the faces and voices of the questioners showed the intensity of their hatred. We could not understand it at all, but Jesus had no illusions.

The time of the great Feast of the Passover was approaching. The attitude of the priests was pronounced and well known. They and the Sanhedrin had declared that if any one should profess his belief in Jesus as the Messiah, he should be forthwith cast out of the synagog, a really terrible fate. You of modern days may not regard the dropping of your names from the roll of the church as a thing of great significance, but in my day no worse punishment could be inflicted, or suffered, than this very thing. Better be a leper, better be dead, than to be an outcast barred from the privileges of the people of God.

As the time of the feast drew near, we were approaching Jerusalem. The rulers of the nation had sent

out an order that, if any one knew where Jesus might be found, such knowledge must be conveyed to them at once, so that He might be taken; and we heard it whispered in Jericho that Caiaphas, who was the High Priest, had advised his associates—who feared that Rome would destroy Israel and despoil our beloved country—to seize Jesus upon the pretext of His being a revolutionist, turn Him over to Rome charged with this offense against Roman rule, and condemned for it by the Sanhedrin, as proof, beyond all question, of Jewish loyalty, thus ridding both Israel and Rome of His presence and of His power with the people.

The command to inform the authorities where Jesus could be found was not necessary, for Jesus at no time made any effort to conceal His whereabouts.

We passed through Jericho, followed by a great number of Passover pilgrims, without effort or pledge of secrecy. Surely no one could accuse Him of trying to hide, when, on the Sabbath preceding the Passover, He rode into the city in the midst of a wildly enthusiastic and an almost uncountable company. He stood in the Temple area, on Solomon's porch, and spoke openly and boldly, as He always did. No! Jesus was not hard to find by those who sought Him.

One incident occurred that gave us hope when we saw how our own nation was turning from Him:

Always, at the time of the feasts, particularly at the time of the Feast of the Passover, visitors, proselytes from all nations, came up to the spiritual center of the faith to which they had given their allegiance, to join in the ceremonies of worship and praise. Jesus was very busy and very watchful of His enemies. They

crowded closer and closer about Him, and in larger numbers each day. But, as never before, He healed the sick, spoke in the most beautiful and appealing of parables, or burst forth into the most terrible denunciation of His foes, who hated Him without a just cause. Never have I seen such courage in any one. The greater the peril, the more strikingly courageous He became—at least it seemed so to us. Questions were parried with such consummate skill as to bring utter confusion upon His enemies.

Among those who were regarded as visitors at this particular feast were a number of Greeks who had heard of Jesus, and had come to Jerusalem wishing and expecting to hear Him. They eagerly pushed through the milling groups until they obtained a place close up, and they were visibly under the spell of Jesus' words. After He had ceased speaking, they approached Philip with a request for an audience with Jesus. Philip was perplexed, not knowing what to do, and came to me to ask what I thought ought to be done. Together we took them to Jesus.

Jesus was deeply affected, and we could not understand what He meant; for as soon as we had brought them to Him, He said: "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. . . . Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" and then, lifting His eyes toward heaven, He cried, "Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." Immediately a voice was heard in answer, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." "Father, save me from this hour." Why? What did it contain from which He

wished to be delivered? We were never told by Him, but long afterward we agreed that these Greeks were so impressed with the wisdom of Jesus, of which they had heard so much in their own land, that they, seeing the open hostility on the part of the ruling classes of the Jews, had offered Him a haven in Greece, their offer bearing the approval of their sovereign, and that Jesus again felt the power of the temptation to escape the cross, toward whose outstretched arms He was advancing so rapidly, and asked His Father's help to keep His face set toward the agreed-upon sacrificial death on Calvary.

From here we went back to Bethany, where we remained until the evening before the day of the Feast of the Passover. Two of our number were sent by Jesus into the city to prepare for the feast, the rest of us followed as evening approached. Into a room in the home of one of the believers, we entered, and found all in readiness; and here we ate the simple elements of the feast, and here too, after Jesus had told us plainly that this would be His last night with us—that on the morrow He must go to the cross—we joined in that other simple feast that was to be His memorial until He, with all the redeemed, would celebrate the consummation of the plan of redemption in His Father's house.

With terrible swiftness the final acts in the awful tragedy moved into their proper places. The betrayal in the Garden; the arrest; the trial in the court of Annas and of The Seventy; His condemnation; His sentence to death; the sanction of Pilate and the actual execution by Roman soldiers—were accomplished in a

very few short hours, and the hearts of His followers were utterly crushed.

For days we remained in the upper room where His memory was so indelibly stamped on every object. We were so overwhelmed that no one even suggested anything else than just to stay here where we felt safe from the enemies of the Master—enemies who might seek us out. It was from this room that the women went to the sepulcher to complete the embalming of His body, and it was to this room that they came back in a little time, breathless from excitement and hurry, to tell us the startling story of the empty tomb and the angel's declaration that He was not among the dead, but among the living; that He had risen, as He had said. All day long such messages kept coming in from different ones—that they had seen Him, that He had spoken to them, that He had broken bread with them—but when night had fallen, and we were again assembled, not knowing what to believe or what to think, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of us and saluted us with the words, "Peace be unto you."

The price that we had paid in sorrow for these last three days was not too great to pay for the joy that now was ours. Faith that had fallen into finest fragments was reformed and firmed. Darkness had given place to noonday light. He was with us in living form. God be praised! We had indeed found Him of whom Moses and the prophets had written. We had found truly the Lamb of God, to whom John the Baptist had pointed us. We had not wasted these years of following; for we had assuredly found the Promised One of God, the Christ, the Messiah, and nothing on

earth or in hell could ever cause us to doubt anything that He had said to us through all these years.

I was only one of the twelve. I had nothing to distinguish me from the others. I did nothing remarkable at any time to attract attention to myself, as did others of the company; but I had a very rich experience, both with John the Baptist and with Jesus.

I shall always be grateful to God for those days with the "Witness" who came to call our attention to "The Light of the World." Never shall I underestimate the greatness of the privilege and blessing of my fellowship with Jesus. I am happy, beyond the telling, that I was able to win my own brother, who was afterward of such great service to the Church, to Jesus. I appreciate to the full, I think, the honor of having a part in service for Him when service was not easy to obtain and was not safe to give.

I can never forget, either, the thrill of the possession and the exercise of that divine power to heal, with which we, who were sent out by the Master, were endowed by Him; nor the one day of real and glorious triumph of Jesus, when He rode into Jerusalem and was welcomed as a King would be greeted; nor the night and the words in the upper room, where we were together for the last time; nor Calvary and the cross and the tomb. Nor will I ever be able to describe or forget the immeasurable gladness which came into my heart when I was convinced that He had risen from the dead.

We at last reached the end of physical fellowship with Him and the beginning of spiritual service for Him. We were close to a spot that was very dear to

Jesus. We were not far from Bethany, where He had spent so many happy hours, standing on the knoll known as the Mount of Olives. Here He gave to us His last command and His most blessed promise:

"Wherever you may go, even tho it be unto the uttermost parts of the world, to win men for me and to me, I will be with you. Fear no one, fear nothing. Cast the net into the great human sea in days when it is calm, as well as when the waves dash high in the days of storm and passion. Cast in the net; launch out into the deep, far from shore, and cast the net in the waters close to land. Draw the net without thought of fear or failure. It will be full; for I have taught you to fish for men, and when and where I give command to let down the net, men will be present. Go!"

And, as we stood silent, thrilled with the greatness of the task and the greatness of the privilege, and by the thought of the glory that would be His when God's purpose to magnify His holy name was accomplished, He was taken from us, and we saw Him no more; but, as we stood gazing after Him, there came to us the promise that He would come again to the earth, as He had gone from it; not to redeem, but to judge the world; not alone, but with the hosts of heaven, and in the glory of the Father; not to suffer, but to reign. I may not see that day. You may not see it, and yet you may; but whether you see it, or do not, He will come. God has said it. Pray the prayer that each of us breathed, as we stood together on this sacred spot, ere we separated from one another to go to our great task: "COME, LORD JESUS, MASTER, CHRIST, REDEEMER, COME QUICKLY."

IV

NICODEMUS, THE SECRET FOLLOWER OF JESUS

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, 'Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.' Jesus answered and said unto Him, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he can not see the Kingdom of God.'

"Nicodemus saith unto Him, 'How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?'

"Jesus answered, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'

"Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, 'How can these things be?'

"Jesus answered, and said unto him, 'Art thou a Master in Israel and knowest not these things?'"

IV

NICODEMUS, THE SECRET FOLLOWER OF JESUS

THE highest court in Israel, when the nation was free from foreign domination, was the Sanhedrin, or "The Seventy," as it was sometimes called. It was composed of twenty-four priests, representing the clergy; twenty-four elders, representing the laity, and twenty-two scribes, who were the interpreters of the law. A President also presided at the daily meetings, which were held in the Temple area.

To become a member of this body one must be morally clean, physically perfect, of middle age, tall of stature, good looking, wealthy, learned in the divine law and in such profane sciences as medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and also in idolatry. He must understand several languages, have children of his own, and be able to trace his lineage to a priest, a Levite, or to an Israelite who was not given to gambling, to the taking of usury, or to dealing in the voluntary produce of the ground's Sabbatical year.

The province of this court was to serve as the Supreme Council of the nation, and was known as "The House of Judgment," interpreting the divine law for Israel, and determining the extension or the limitation of its sundry enactments; watching over the purity and the legality of the priesthood, and trying cases of unchastity, which were punishable by death. Aside

from these duties, the religious life of the nation came under its supervision, especially cases of tribal idolatry. False prophets were to be brought before it and tried, and heretics were punished by it for their wanderings from the truth.

"The Seventy" was charged with restraining either king or high priest from departing from the narrow path of the law, and with determining whether or no a war should be waged by the nation; with deciding whether the limits of the holy city or the precincts of the Temple should be enlarged; with appointing courts of justice, and with the regulation of the calendar, so that the lunar and the solar year would be in harmony.

I was a member of this great body, and I confess that I held it to be no mean honor to be regarded as worthy to hold, and to be chosen to hold, membership in it.

I was also a Pharisee. Doubtless, an immediate resentment is felt by you who hear me, against this sect of Israel. Especially is this likely when you remember those terrible words spoken against its members by Jesus Christ in the latter days of His wonderful ministry; but the original purpose was not without its redeeming features. The name itself indicates "separation." As we applied it to our lives, it was a clear statement of our determination to separate ourselves from all Levitical impurity, and from eating all foods that were ceremonially unclean. We were also "separatists" in the unfolding or interpretation of the Scriptures. We interpreted them in a more liberal spirit than the Sadducees, who were literalists. In time, corruption of the original objects led to separation from

others of our people because of a feeling that we were of greater purity and holiness than they.

Every Pharisee had solemnly to agree to set aside the tithe of the produce of the land, and to refuse to eat any food which had not been previously tithed; also solemnly to observe the most essential laws of purity affecting food and family affairs.

This, of course, led to very burdensome requirements, such as handwashings and bathings; and to exceedingly technical and questionable interpretations and applications of these interpretations.

Such claims to superiority naturally led to a certain measure of vanity, which found expression very quickly in an open appeal for the praise of men for our moral perfections. You will remember the words of Jesus concerning the giving of alms, and prayers and fastings. You will remember that He warned His hearers against our habits, which were but a bid for public praise. "They have their reward," He said; "but when thou prayest, or givest alms, or fastest, let no man hear, or see, or suspect; but there is One who will hear the secret prayer in the closet, who will see the gift bestowed without blare of trumpet, who will detect the spirit of sacrifice and worship, covered from sight of men by the garments of normal life, and will reward openly."

I am ashamed to confess, but I must do so, that of all the practises which Jesus condemned I was guilty; yet I was sincere.

I was about ten years old when three strangely clad men, speaking the language of the Far East, showing clearly the evidence of wealth, refinement, and culture,

entered the city of Jerusalem and asked the startling question, "Where is He who is born King of the Jews?"

I remember well the quick assembling of the Sanhedrin, and the hurried searching of the writings of the prophets, and the answer given, that the King was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea; and I remember the early departure of the three for that little village on the plains. I remember, too, the great sorrow that swept over Israel when the suspicious and cruel Herod caused all male children under two years old to be put to death, that he might make his own kingdom proof against a possible revolution led by this infant king when manhood had been reached.

About thirty years after this, a man named John suddenly appeared, and declared that the Kingdom of God, for which we had so long been looking, and for which we had been hoping, was at hand, and called upon all men everywhere to repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Of course, all Israel was expecting the coming of the Messiah; for all knew that the "seventy weeks" of Daniel's prophecy were ended, and the time was at hand.

We thought that this one who was attracting such throngs, and was baptizing all who came unto him, might be the God-appointed One, the Restorer. We of the Sanhedrin immediately sent a deputation to him to inquire who he was, and by whose authority he spoke, and by what right he baptized, and received the answer from him that he was simply a "Voice Crying in the Wilderness," warning men to prepare the way of the Lord; to make His paths straight. "But," he added,

"there is one in your midst at this moment, who has not yet been recognized, who is the Promised One, whose forerunner only I am." Because of his public and bitter attack upon Herod's private life, which life was certainly disgraceful, he was arrested and imprisoned, and we heard no more of him, or from him; but it was afterward learned that he had been put to death.

Very soon after the voice of John had been stilled, the people in the northern portion of our country were again thrown into the wildest confusion and enthusiasm by the appearance and the words of one called Jesus, of the little village of Nazareth. In many ways He was very much like John, and yet there was a marked difference.

The results of His words and works were such as to demand an investigation by the Sanhedrin, for we were charged with the guarding of the religious life of our people, and it was natural that we should wish to know something of this new Teacher and His teachings. Somehow we were apprehensive, from the beginning, of both the Man and His message. John, with his cry, "Repent!" could not but bring good results to the nation; for repentance, whether national or individual, could hurt no one; in fact, we sympathized with such a spiritually purifying process.

But this new Teacher was wholly different in His methods and His message. Reports were brought to us at our daily gatherings, and caused us no little concern; for we were told that He was usurping a very important part of our recognized task—interpretation of the Scriptures. To illustrate what I mean: On one

occasion He had said: "It is written of old time, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also, and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." And again he said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said"—and this was written in the law—" 'thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy'; but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Such instruction was not to our liking, so we kept close watch upon Him, and in touch with the crowds that followed Him, and discovered that He was a real peril to our body.

The people were beginning to recognize and to speak of the difference between His teaching and our interpretations, saying, "He speaks with authority and not as do the Scribes and Pharisees."

Then there came to us the stories, oft repeated, of a strange, miraculous power possessed by Him, and used by Him for the healing of even the lepers, and in the raising of the dead. Some of the bolder ones of His followers openly declared Him to be the Christ of God, but we knew that He had come out of Nazareth, ill-famed village that it was, while the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea.

We determined to observe Him closely, and to watch very carefully those who companied with Him. First of all, we sent some of our shrewdest, wisest members to hear Him, and then we passed and issued an edict

that if any one should confess faith in Him as the Christ—who, we all hoped, would come speedily to free us from Rome's power—he would be immediately cast out of the synagog, a penalty most dreadful and most feared by every Israelite. A leper might stand and cry for food or alms, and we would give of our means to supply his needs; the injured might cry for help and receive it at our hands; the thirsty might appeal for water to cool the parched tongue, and we would give him from even our scant supply. But when a man had been cast out of the synagog by The Seventy, no mercy would be shown. Better far were it for him that he should die than to live an utter outcast, such as our edict made of him. His own family looked upon him as specially cursed of God, and regarded him as already dead. We were very sure that this would curb many an enthusiast, and that it would quickly render His work of no effect. It did have an effect, but it did not crush the movement. I voted for this decree.

Up to this time, my knowledge of Him and of His work had been based wholly upon reports brought to us by those whom we had every reason to trust. I now determined—both from curiosity and from an honest desire to judge Him fairly—to find out for myself all that I could learn, by hearing and by seeing Him. At first I approached Him only in the public assemblies, when large crowds were gathered about Him; for I felt that people, seeing me near Him, would conclude that I was where I was in my official capacity, as an observer and a judge. No possible suspicion could rest upon me.

I heard Him speak, and in spite of my deep-set prejudice, I could not but wonder.

I saw Him exercise His healing power on a poor crippled woman who crept close and touched the hem of His garment as He was passing by. It was so quickly and so quietly done that I was amazed. I saw Him again as He opened the eyes of a blind beggar, and I knew that there was no trickery about such an act. The man actually saw. The result was that I wanted to come into closer contact with Him, and I wanted to talk with Him without danger of detection or of interruption. I determined to meet Him. I followed Him and His disciples—for He now had a little group of men and women who defied our edict and seemed to feel honored by standing close to Him in His public meetings—and found where they stopped, and marked well the place.

That night I decided to see Him, and, making my way thither, I found myself before the door. Everything had been favorable to me. No one of my acquaintances had seen me. The night was dark, owing to an approaching storm, and the house was not surrounded by others who wished to hear or to be healed. I knocked, and the door was opened and quickly closed after I had entered. I found myself, a Sanhedrist, in His presence.

Shall I tell you why I came to Him by night? It is hardly necessary, and the confession of my weakness is humiliating, yet I will tell you my reasons. In the first place, it was because I feared the very action that I had helped to make a part of our law—the edict of ostracism. I knew that The Seventy would pay no more

heed to me, if their suspicions were aroused, than they would pay to the meanest of Israel; in fact, they might be even more severe with me than with another. I, who had so long enjoyed their fellowship and confidence and favor; I, who had been so long looked up to by the masses as one worthy of their greatest respect, was terribly afraid of the consequences of discovery by them in this most questionable position. I own to a fear that made of me an arrant coward.

In the second place, I admit that the praise of men, which I was constantly receiving—praise for my elevation, for the life and looks and knowledge and piety that had earned this recognition—all this was very dear to me. Do not condemn me before you have tried to put yourself in my place; and then imagine yourself stripped of it all. If you think then that I am without some justification, pass judgment upon me as harshly as you will. I loved the praise of men, and I did not wish to forfeit it; at least, not until I knew that what I might gain would balance this loss.

This is not an easy confession to make, but it is an honest one. In coming to Jesus, however, I did not disguise myself in any way. I felt sure that He would understand clearly why I had come at night, and I was confident, also, that He would upbraid me for my cowardice. I felt deeply embarrassed and self-conscious as I entered into His presence; but neither He nor His disciples showed any surprize, and very quickly my own sensitiveness disappeared. I was fearful that approach to Him would be difficult because of my easily recognized membership in the Sanhedrin which had so recently shown its antagonism to Him;

but my apprehension was groundless; for approach to Him was easy, and so far as His reception of me was concerned, I might have been one of the twelve returning after a prolonged absence.

We wasted no time in preliminaries. There were many things upon my heart, and I began at once to ask and He to answer my questions; and, as we talked, I was amazed at the ease with which He swept aside long-established traditions and recognized interpretations. I was little less astounded at my allowing Him to do so without protest, and at the great measure of satisfaction and peace that took the place of the unrest and uncertainty that had long persisted in my own heart.

We sat and talked far into the night as He explained to me the change, deep-seated and internal, not surface or external, that must occur in the life of either Jew or Gentile—he called it "being born again" —before one could really become a true child of God.

Before I left Him He had given me an entirely new conception of membership in the Kingdom of God—the blood of Abraham flowing in one's veins meant nothing at all, the attitude of heart and mind, everything; that God would not redeem or favor the Jew because he was a Jew, but that He so loved *the world* that He had sent Him into it so that any one and every one believing on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

The gray light of dawn was showing in the eastern sky when my visit ended—ended not because either He or I was wearied, but because I knew that I must go, as I had come to Him, while recognition was still all

but impossible. But I left with a very different understanding of Him and of the kingdom which John the Baptist had declared established; I went away fully convinced, in my own heart, that He was what He claimed to be, the only begotten Son of God, the Messiah for whom Israel had been so long waiting.

The interest of the masses in Him and in His work continued unabated, great throngs following Him wherever He went and listening eagerly to His words; but the antagonism of The Seventy kept even pace, or perhaps forged ahead.

I took no part in the discussions in the Sanhedrin when He was being considered. Once and again I protested against what was plainly an unlawful proceeding or decision, or a procedure contrary to established and recognized practise; but in no way did I give a hint of the real reason for my protest.

Nor was I the only one in this highest court of the nation who had recognized Jesus as the promised Deliverer. There was a man named Joseph, among the scribes or the legal branch, whom I frequently heard protesting some proposed action or some prejudiced decision. When it was approved over his protest, I many times saw him slowly shake his head in disapproval. The conviction was at last reached by me that he had no interest in the persecution of this One; so, one day I approached him, and in a tactful way spoke to him of his protests and my own, and then I asked him to tell me frankly what he thought of Jesus. To my great joy I found that he too had been persuaded that He was the Christ. Thereafter we were much together. With deep shame we confessed to each other

our reasons for not declaring publicly our faith in Him —fear of the action of The Seventy and love for the praise of men. Again and again we reached the determination to come out openly in His favor, but we lacked the courage to do it.

With the passing days we were impressed with the vindictive nature of the opposition of our associates. With little less than horror we listened to the outspoken determination to destroy Him, and to the plans for accomplishing His destruction. It was appalling to hear even Caiaphas, the High Priest, sanctioning such a movement, and also suggesting a method by which the real purpose might be concealed and the actual guilt passed on to Rome.

At last the day of the great feast approached, and this time was fixed upon as the most practical and most certain of success; for at this feast—which celebrated our exodus from bondage to Egypt, the beginning of our independent national life—the spirit of patriotism was at white heat. At no other feast of the year was such almost fanatical loyalty displayed by the great hosts who came from every part of Palestine to Jerusalem.

The charge which was to be preferred against Him in our court was carefully selected. It was to be blasphemy, for this One had claimed, in words that could not be misunderstood, to be the Son of God. Witnesses were secured for pay to testify against Him, and for days their testimony was rehearsed before us. Arrangements were made for an unlawful assembling of the Sanhedrin—at night. Conviction by the Sanhedrin, under such circumstances, was a foregone conclusion.

There remained only the hurrying to Pilate's court for Rome's sanction, and then to the cross before the people could protest our action or attempt a rescue of the condemned.

The one problem that was as yet unsolved, the most disturbing of all, was how to accomplish the arrest and destruction without provoking an outburst on the part of the people. This must be solved, and solved at once.

To all of this Joseph and I listened, and against its illegality we both protested, and for none of these plans did we vote when they were submitted to The Seventy. Our consistent attitude of opposition had not gone unnoticed, and we were once quite disturbed, when I protested against a man being condemned without a hearing, and Caiaphas asked, "Have any of the *Rulers* believed on him?"

All was in readiness now. The throngs came to the feast, and were met by an order from the Sanhedrin, that if any one knew where Jesus could be found, he should immediately furnish such information to it, that He might be taken. A very foolish and unnecessary order; for Jesus was already in Bethany, a guest at the home of His friends there.

Not only in the daytime, but at night meetings were held by our body to devise some means of laying hold upon Him. One night, while this matter was being very earnestly discussed, there entered the room one whom we had seen on many occasions with Jesus—a young man who, months before, had frequently been about the court. His name was Judas, and he came from the little village of Kerioth, about twenty miles

from Jerusalem. Just as he entered the room, Caiaphas was suggesting the payment of money to some one of His friends who might make His arrest easy. To the amazement of all, this young man at once stepped forward, asked the sum that would be paid, haggled a little over the amount, and then accepted the offer. The money was counted out and paid to him by Caiaphas. The one remaining difficulty had been removed, and at so little cost, and by one so close to Him, that all were overjoyed, altho the satisfaction was concealed from the traitor.

Plans were now quickly laid. Arrangements were made for soldiers to make the arrest. The time, the place and the manner were left to Judas.

The night preceding the feast came, and Caiaphas and the rest of His enemies showed signs of unrest. Would Judas fail? Would Jesus again show His marvelous skill at evading His enemies? Would success elude them after such careful planning?

Just as every one had come to the conclusion that the plans had once more gone astray, a noise, as of many approaching, was heard; hoarse cries and torches; and then into the court came the soldiers with Jesus, bound securely, in their midst.

Now there was no question of success. Caiaphas was sitting in the place of the High Priest, and the members quickly took their places, and assumed the attitude of dignity which was their wont. Annas shared with Caiaphas, his son-in-law, the honors of the priestly office, and, out of consideration for him, Jesus was at once sent to him for questioning. In a few moments He was returned to the presence of the

court, and Caiaphas began the trial by the introduction of the charge, blasphemy, and the witnesses to its truth—perjuring witnesses. But here the weakness of the indictment and the testimony was clearly seen by all; for the witnesses disagreed in their testimony, and no conviction with the slightest appearance of fairness could be hoped for. Caiaphas recognized this hopeless situation and met it by rising from his place, and, after adjuring Jesus that He tell the truth, asking Him if He were the Son of God, as He had claimed to be. Without a moment's hesitation, the answer came. "Yes," He said, "I am the Son of God, and hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

With a cry that was almost a scream, Caiaphas stooped down and tore the border of his garment, and then shouted to the others of the body: "What need have we for further testimony? He is guilty of blasphemy." To this decision the vote agreed, and Jesus was sentenced to death. The Jewish method of executing the death penalty was by stoning or by burning, but Rome's method was by the cross, and this method must be followed. Rome's consent to crucify must be obtained, too, since we were under her rule.

Usually this was a mere formality, and with the greatest confidence that the hard part of the road to the cross had been traversed, Jesus was hurried to Pilate's residence just as day was breaking, and Pilate was called out to hear the request—and to grant it.

The greatest surprize of all was waiting for His enemies here; for Pilate was in an ugly mood, and blocked every move to hurry to a conclusion this

tragedy. He took his time to examine the Accused on the charges preferred against Him. All this time, day was advancing, and the streets were filling with people. The delay was maddening. Again and again Pilate came from the presence of Jesus and declared that there was no truth in the charges, and that he would set Him free. Mad with fear, new charges were preferred; and with the same distressing deliberation Pilate would examine the witness and announce his decision of innocence. But his delay was matched by the determination of the priests, and finally he yielded and gave sentence that Jesus should be crucified. With all haste the cross was made ready by the soldiers and the journey to Calvary was begun. By this time the streets were filled, but the treatment which Jesus had suffered in Pilate's judgment hall had so disfigured Him that recognition was difficult, and little protest was heard and no attempt at rescue made.

Joseph of Arimathea and I followed the crowd to the "Place of the Skull," and there we saw Him nailed to the cross, and the cross raised to an upright position, bearing on its rugged outstretched arms the One whom we had followed so long in secret. We stood apart from the Sanhedrin, and also at a distance from the little group of men and women who had followed Him openly, who now stood weeping not far from the cross. We took no part in the tirades of abuse indulged in by the members of the Sanhedrin. We could not.

We saw His terrible suffering through hours that it seemed to us never would end. We heard His cries. And there came to me those words of His, spoken to

me on my visit to Him in the night, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

Tears began to flow down my cheeks. I looked at Joseph, as he stood beside me, and I saw that he, too, was weeping. Oh, how our hearts ached! Jesus was not ashamed or afraid to die on the cursed tree for us. We had both been ashamed and afraid to live for Him. At last we heard the cry, "It is finished," and we knew that He was dead. I could not take my eyes from the cross with its cruelly broken burden. How long I stood thus I do not know, but at last I turned toward the place where Joseph had stood, and discovered that he was not there. I was alone. But only a little time passed, and he was again beside me. He told me that he had gone to Pilate and had asked permission to take the body of Jesus from the cross, and to give it decent burial; that he had a new-hewn tomb close by where he would lay it, and that Pilate had given permission to do so just so soon as he should be properly certified of the death of Jesus.

We saw the centurion leave the cross and soon return to his place. We knew that he had gone to Pilate. Immediately, Joseph started for the cross. I knew what he intended to do. I followed him. We had come to Golgotha in the garments of our office. We still wore them, but we cared not for this, nor for the fact that we would be instantly recognized by all who stood about the cross. The soldiers, gambling for the garments of the crucified, drew back at the command of their officer, and we, aided by the disciples, who quickly

joined us, tenderly lifted the cross from its place, removed the cruel nails that held Him, and carried Him to the garden tomb that was ready, and, hastily wrapping His body in the usual grave clothes—for the day of the feast would begin when the sun had set—we rolled the stone door to its place and went our way to the city.

We had been recognized by our former associates in the Sanhedrin, and before darkness fell, The Seventy had met once more and had cast out of the synagog both Joseph and me.

The Feast of the Passover was a great event. The priests and the Sanhedrin had leading parts in its celebration. The whole nation paid us homage in our exalted positions. But Joseph's successor and mine had already been appointed, and we realized that we were outcasts.

No one would hereafter speak to us. Our own families would henceforth regard us as polluted; but what we had so long dreaded did not now seem so terrible to us, for the followers of Jesus, who were with us at the cross and at the tomb, invited us to go with them to the upper room, and in the fellowship of those who had been less cowardly than we, we found compensation for all that we had lost.

Days went by—days that are terrible to recall; days in which tears and sorrow and darkness prevailed—days that seemed endless. But the gloom at last gave place to a glorious day of rejoicing. The coming of the first day of the week permitted the completion of the embalmment of the body of the dead Jesus, and some of the women departed early in the morning with

spices to perform this service; but soon they were back with the startling news that the grave was empty, and that they had seen angels sitting in the tomb where the body of Jesus had lain; these angels, they declared, had upbraided them for seeking the living among the dead, assuring them that Jesus had risen from the grave, as He had told them that He would, on the third day after His death.

All through the day word was brought to us that He had appeared to this one or to that one of the believers. We could not but believe. The transformation from doubt to assurance was complete, however, when, after night had fallen and the doors were barred, Jesus Himself stood in our midst and spoke to us and showed to us the marks of the cross in His hands and feet and side, and broke bread and ate before us. It was truly wonderful.

I can not tell you of the deep regret that was mine, regret for the years of my *secret* following of Jesus. It did not pay. Both Joseph and I decided this. We missed so much that we might have gained. We endured so much that we gladly would have missed. We both realized at last the emptiness of the praise of men, and the fulness of the meaning of approval by God.

The hypocrisy of the Sanhedrin life gave way to the happiness of service for the risen Christ. Our one regret has ever been that we did not let our convictions be known; for others in the Sanhedrin might have become open followers of Him, and multitudes not in the high court of the Jews might have followed us—and Him.

But there is one thought that comes to me over and over again, and brings a real joy with its coming. We were with the disciples of Jesus in the upper room when He appeared to us, after His resurrection from the grave. We had cast aside our official robes. We had been received by His followers into their company, and our risen Christ knew that we had accepted Him as our redeemer and friend, and would henceforth follow Him openly.

I have come to the end of my story. It was a wonderful experience, and I can never forget it or cease to be thankful for it; for it led me to this conclusion, and I hope that my conclusion will also be yours: Fear is folly where Christ is concerned. Silence concerning one's attitude toward Him is without profit or gain. Real joy, and peace, and power are the fruitage of an open confession and a close following of Him who came into the world to save sinners by the way of the cross.

V

JOHN, THE SON OF ZEBEDEE, THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

"Now as He walked by the sea of Galilee, He saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, 'Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.' And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed Him.

"And when He had gone a little farther thence, He saw James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, who also were in the ship, mending their nets. And straightway He called them; and they left their father, Zebedee, in the ship, with the hired servant, and went after Him."

. . . . . .

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, 'Woman, behold thy son!' Then saith He to the disciple, 'Behold thy mother!' And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

V

JOHN, THE SON OF ZEBEDEE, THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

MY CHILDHOOD days were stormy ones, due far more to myself than to any one else. Nor did the coming of maturer years greatly affect my life for the better. I had a temper that easily got beyond my control, and many times it found or made for itself novel means of expression.

My father, Zebedee, often warned me of the danger of such outbursts, danger both to me and to others. My mother, Salome, from my boyhood days, was greatly worried about me, and she shed many tears over my readiness to rage savagely upon the slightest provocation. James, my brother, was very much like me, and our quarrels were many and bitter. It seemed that we were both constantly on the watch for occasions to renew a strife which could not wholly burn itself out.

Our home was at Bethsaida, in Galilee, at the very northernmost tip of the Sea of Galilee. My father was a fisherman of more than the average affluence, and when we were old enough we became members of the crew, and later shared with him in the business. We owned our home in this beautiful little village, owned our boats, and had a number of men in our employ. These came and went with a monotonous regularity,

giving as their reason our unreasonableness. This meant simply that James and I would fly into a rage upon the slightest pretext, and roundly abuse them, or falsely blame them for mistakes that were plainly our own; or we would fall upon them and beat them cruelly with our fists or with more dangerous weapons. Of course, they would not tolerate for long such unjust treatment as this, and we were always breaking in new crews, or were working shorthanded, but we would not control ourselves, altho we knew that our profits were greatly curtailed by our conduct.

I knew that it was all wrong, but I made no effort at control. We were strong, physically; few were more rugged than we. We were always alert and watchful of our interests. No one dared to impose upon us, nor resist us; so when we wanted a certain fishing ground for our own we had little or no opposition. Oh, sometimes hot words passed, and again we were glowered at; but boats and crews withdrew to less troublesome waters, even tho they were less profitable, and brought to shore much smaller catches of fish, while our boats were usually well filled.

Yet, we men were always present on the seventh day in the synagog, and assumed a very religious air.

In my early twenties I was informed of the appearance of the prophet, John the Baptist, near Bethabara, and I determined at once to hear him. I was accompanied by a neighbor of about my own age, whose name was Andrew, the brother and fishing partner of Simon.

We were both very deeply moved by John's earnestness and eloquence, and stayed with him longer

than we had intended. One day we were with John when he pointed to One who was not far from us, One whom he had baptized a day or two before, and said to us, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Immediately we left John and followed this One, until, discovering us, He spoke to us, inviting us to break bread with Him, which we were glad to do.

We sat together and talked with Him well into the evening hours, and when we left Him, both Andrew and I were fully persuaded that we had found the Messiah whom God had promised to Israel. Andrew hurried back to Capernaum to bring Simon, his brother. Another, Philip, who joined us the following day, soon left to bring a friend, Nathanael, to Him. But I remained where I was until they returned, and both Simon and Nathanael agreed with Andrew and me, that this One could be no other than the One of whom John the Baptist had spoken—the Son of God.

In these days, while Andrew and Philip were absent, I learned that Jesus of Nazareth—for that was His name—and I were closely related to each other, my mother, Salome, and His mother, Mary, being sisters.

That we had grown to manhood without meeting, was not a strange thing; for visiting was not a common practise among us in that day, and even when in attendance upon the great religious feasts at Jerusalem, the city was so overcrowded with her countless guests, that *not* to meet there with others closely related was not a cause for surprize.

For a short while only we remained with Jesus at this time. We returned to the Sea of Galilee and to

our fishing, to be visited in our own village a little later by Jesus, who then invited us to follow Him, as we had for these few days, but now for a much longer time, assuring us that we would be very useful to Him.

Immediately Simon, Andrew, James and I left our boats and our business, our homes and our families, and went with Him.

I do not think that Jesus made any inquiry concerning any one of us four. Nor do I think that any one revealed to Him any information concerning us. I have no doubt, however, that many about that part of the sea were glad that two of the four, at least, were soon to leave the neighborhood, and that the hope was very strong that their absence would be a prolonged one.

Jesus seemed to be able to judge very quickly, and judge accurately, the characters of those with whom He came into contact. I do not remember that any particular display of temper occurred. I do not remember that there was even a slight quarrel between us; but very soon after we joined Him, Jesus had given to Simon the name, Cephas, a Stone, and we had not been with Him long before He had renamed James and me "Boanerges," which means "Sons of Thunder," "Children of the Storm." Flashing lightning and crashing thunder are always associated in thought with storms; but "Boanerges" was no more of a misnomer for us, as the later days revealed all too clearly, than was the new name given by Jesus to Simon—Cephas, a Stone.

When our company had grown to twelve in number by Jesus' invitation, Simon was regarded by us as the one who could always be depended upon to do the un-

expected thing—as the one to act largely upon the impulse of the moment. But Simon was mild indeed when compared to us, the Sons of Zebedee. His outbursts were of a very different type from ours. His were outbursts of speech, such as his words in answer to Jesus' question, "Whom do ye say that I the Son of Man am?"—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God"; or like his request to be permitted to walk upon the water to Jesus, who had so terribly frightened us all by suddenly appearing close beside us as we rowed helplessly against the storm-tossed waters of the sea. But ours were just plain outbursts of temper, anger, jealousy, intolerance, selfishness, and unholy ambition. One of these instances will illustrate what I mean.

The Master and we had been in the north country and had started a little late for the feast at Jerusalem. Coming to the border of Samaria, if we had followed the usual practise we would have crossed to the east side of the river Jordan, passing through Perea until we had got beyond the southern border of Samaria, when we would have recrossed the river and gone on to Jerusalem. But being late in beginning the journey, Jesus decided upon the more direct route through Samaria. Night was approaching rapidly, and we decided to stay in one of the little villages. We attempted to find lodging for Him and for us, but because of the age-old prejudice, and because we were traveling in the direction of Jerusalem, they refused to let us remain or to entertain us. We were very angry, and the "Sons of Thunder" broke forth in their fury, crying unto the Master for permission to call down

fire from heaven to consume the village for its insult to Him. Again, while we were traveling, at the command of Jesus, throughout the length and breadth of the land, we found one who was casting out demons in the name of Jesus. He was not known to us, and we indignantly forbade him to continue his work of healing unless he joined us. When we returned to report to Jesus the results of our work, we told Him of this incident, thinking that we had shown great loyalty to Him; but he sharply rebuked us for both of these outbursts, reminding us that He had come not to destroy men's lives but to save them, and that any one who would honor Him by reverently using His name in the work of healing should be considered not an offender, but a friend.

There was one subject, however, that could provoke a quarrel among us all in a moment, whenever it was mentioned—our *relative* place in the Kingdom which John the Baptist had declared to be at hand, and which we all firmly believed Jesus would establish.

Oh, how bitter we became! If we ever merited the title Jesus gave us, "The Children of the Storm," "The Sons of Thunder," it was when we launched our claims, not to a place, but to the place—next to the King.

One of these character-revealing outbursts occurred after a certain bitter quarrel on this subject.

As I said, our business in Capernaum had prospered largely through our bullying tactics on the waters of the Sea of Galilee. I had also been very fortunate in marketing the cured or dried fish in Jerusalem, and quite a fortune had been accumulated in this way—good fishing, good marketing.

Soon after we left to follow Jesus, our father Zebedee died. My mother disposed of the business, for she was sure that neither James nor I would ever return to reenter it. She had been deeply impressed from the first by the words and deeds of Jesus; so, when she found herself free from household and family cares, she determined to devote herself and her means to forwarding the work of the Kingdom. She was most generous, and many comforts were enjoyed by Jesus through her thoughtful generosity. She was not always with us on our journeys, but there was a group of women who joined us when we made stops of any length at Capernaum, or at near-by cities.

One of these periodic quarrels had ended—a particularly bitter quarrel it had been—just before my mother joined us. She quickly saw that something was wrong with the group, and came to the very easy and early and just conclusion that James and I had not been altogether blameless. She inquired, and we told her the occasion of the dissension.

The mother of our great progenitor, Israel, long ago had come to the rescue of her favorite son, when it seemed that what she considered to be rightly his was about to pass to another, who had despised it. My mother was too wise to attempt such favoritism as Rebecca showed for Jacob, and against Esau. James and I were too much alike, and she knew it. She knew, too, that unending trouble would result, if she should prefer one of us above the other. But she did want preference shown her sons, if preference was to be shown to any one.

Her plans were quickly laid. Depending not a little

upon the close blood relationship to Him, in which both she and we stood, and perhaps not too little upon her own recent generous conduct toward Him and His work, she went with us to Him, and asked Him to grant to her whatever request she might make of Him. I have no doubt that Jesus knew, before a word was uttered, the request that she would make; but He asked her to make it known. This she did at once, asking that we, James and I, might sit, the one on His right side, the other on His left, when He should establish His Kingdom.

Jesus showed no particular surprize at the nature of this request. We supported her suggestion most heartily. Jesus assured both her and us that she and we had little conception of what the granting of her desire would involve. He turned to us, and asked us if we felt ourselves able to share in the baptism which was His, and to drink of the cup from which He must drink the bitter draught. Without a moment's hesitation, without the slightest thought or conception of what was involved, but with sublime egotism and self-assurance, we declared that we were abundantly able. And then He said to us: "Ye shall indeed be baptized with my baptism, and ye shall share my cup with me; but to give the places of honor for which you have asked is not granted unto me."

We did not understand *then* what we so readily professed our willingness to share, but in our later years we came to understand; for James died a martyr's death at the hands of Herod, and I myself endured great persecution.

Instead of my mother's request settling the recur-

rent controversy over the chief place, it only revived it; for in some way the other ten learned of what she—and we—had done, and they were very angry.

When in the very last days of Jesus' life among us, we were in the house of Mary and Martha, in Bethany, and a feast had been prepared for Him and us by the sisters of Lazarus, as an expression of the family's appreciation for the restoration of their brother to life, Mary, as the feast progressed, stood behind Jesus and anointed Him with the most costly perfume. Its fragrance was ravishing, but when Judas cried out against such useless extravagance, once more the lightning flashed and the thunder roared. The Sons of Thunder were again in action, for we joined him in his condemnation of such waste when there were so many blind and leprous who might have been aided by its price. When mothers brought their little ones to Jesus, that He might lay His hands upon them, and bless them and pray for them, we were again among the first to protest against this unwarranted interruption of His conversation with us.

I am telling you these things, these unhappy occurrences, that you may realize that we of the Twelve, and especially we of that inner group of three, were not men of a particularly appealing or lovable type. We were only average, ordinary men, whom Jesus chose not because of what we were *when He called us* to follow Him, but because of what He saw *we might become*. He called us not because we were already fishers of men, but because He would make us fishers of men.

From my first contact with Him, I felt a very strong

affection for Him. In spite of my frequent displays of anger, selfishness, intolerance and unholy ambition, my love for Him grew until it was the one mastering passion of my life. I could cordially hate Peter. I could quarrel bitterly with James. I could almost come to blows with Matthew, the Publican; but I could only love Jesus. To cause me so to change that I would be able to catch men, I realize now, was a task which only One divine would either contemplate or undertake to accomplish.

I could catch men and subdue them by brute force, but that was my only method. Jesus had very clearly taught us that this was not His method of drawing men to Him. And I am not sure that this was not the reason why Jesus made selection, as He did, of Peter and James and me to be with Him on many occasions when His power was to be manifested in unusual measure. Weak men can be easily remolded, for they are like clay in the hands of the potter; but men with strong prejudices and strong passions require more heroic measures. So Jesus took us with Him into the room of death in the house of Jairus, and we stood by the side of the bed upon which the body of the dead little girl lay, and we saw Him take her lifeless hand in His, and heard Him say, "Daughter, I say unto thee, Arise." And we saw her breast rise and fall, as she began to breathe; saw the blood mount slowly to her temples, as life came again; saw her eyelids tremble, and then open wide; saw her rise from her bed and leap into the outstretched arms of her mother.

We were again chosen to climb, with Him, the sides of Mount Hermon, while the others remained on the

plain below. Here we saw Him assume the full majesty of the Divine nature; saw Him shed the garments of His humanity and clothe Himself in the garments of His glory; saw Him receive the homage of Moses and Elijah, who stood to us as the embodiment of the Law and the Prophets.

It was to us three, as we sat together on the Mount of Olives, this time with the addition of Andrew, that Jesus told us of the signs that should precede the coming of the end of the age, and His own coming again to receive His Kingdom and to rule. It was here that He warned us against the Antichrist, foretelling strife, and famine and pestilence; assigning no exact day or year or period, but urging us to watch and pray, lest, coming suddenly, He should find us sleeping or careless or unprepared.

On that dreadful night, His last with us, just before the cross, He chose us to go with Him a little deeper into the Garden, and it was of us three that He made request—a request that we shamelessly refused —that we watch with Him through the hour of His great agony of body, mind and spirit—that hour when He took the cup from His Father's hand, raised it to his lips, and drank its bitter contents.

Not to others, but to us, strong-willed, quick-tongued, easily angered, cruelly intolerant, selfishly ambitious, sons of Zebedee—Sons of Thunder—and to Simon, whom Jesus called Cephas, the Rock, these experiences were granted; and they were necessary that we might be changed, so as to become successful fishers of men.

And we were gradually changed. There was nothing

miraculous about the transformation. Nothing even approaching the going out of the evil and the coming in of the good that we witnessed on the hilltop near Gadara. Nothing like the sudden change in Mary, the Magdalen. Nothing like the restoration of sight to the man born blind. Nothing like the cleansing from leprosy in those so distressed.

Jesus could have changed Simon into "Cephas, a Stone," by a word. He could have changed me from a raging, roaring Son of Thunder, to a quiet, meek, peace-loving creature, in a moment of time, if He had so chosen. But He did not so choose. He knew that it would be best for us to be changed in a natural, normal way, and so, day by day and month by month, He talked with us, lived among us, corrected us when we needed correction, inspired us, saturated us with His own loving spirit, until these combined forces began to make us over into men such as He wanted us to be—men who could catch men.

I never cease to marvel that He bore with us and our faults, so strongly entrenched, and with our petty jealousies. With a patience and persistence that were nothing less than divine, He wore down the rough, sharp, jagged, hateful and hurtful edges of our characters, and brought to the surface and to the light their opposites, which had been so long covered up. He never chided us for our character-weaknesses. He sometimes expressed disappointment at our lack of faith, when we showed a vision far too limited or an understanding too restricted. He would speak sharply, reprovingly, but not in anger. I do not remember that He ever spoke to me directly of my outstanding faults,

but there was something about Him and in Him that accomplished results within us that were very like the stilling of the storm-tossed sea or the quieting of a demon-driven soul. Something it was that we could not divine—something that we could not resent and did not resist—something that was changing us. Little things that once enraged us did not now disturb us. Only such conditions as would cause well-controlled dispositions to break bounds provoked in us the old-time anger. Just one thing still fanned the embers of our passion into a flame—our place in the Kingdom. But the day came when even this lost its power to inflame.

As I look back upon those onrushing, appalling experiences, I wonder more and more.

We were in the Garden of Gethsemane with Him on that terrible night of betrayal. We must have been very deeply depressed by what Jesus had told us in the upper room, to sleep so soon and so soundly; but I remember the sensation when He woke me from sleep, saying, "He that betrayeth me is at hand." He had told me in the room we had so recently left, that Judas would betray Him into the hands of His enemies. How it ever occurred that I could see the traitor kiss the Master, and thus betray Him to those that followed him; how I could see the soldiers bind Him and lead Him away; how I could see the servant of the High Priest strike Him, and see others in the place of the trials spit upon and abuse Him, without raging in resentment, without striking in His defense, I have not yet been able to understand. Possibly, the overwhelming strength of numbers may have cowed me;

but without a spoken word of protest, without even a cry, I let them do their pleasure with my Lord—and their pleasure was His destruction by way of the cross.

How those long, endless hours on the cross passed, I do not know. It seemed that death would never come; that His sufferings would never end. With every cry from the cross, I thought my heart would break with added grief. But at last came the cry, "It is finished," and I knew that the end had come.

My place in the Kingdom meant nothing to me now; for the King was dead, and His kingdom would never be. Oh, how senseless we had been in quarreling so bitterly over the place next to Him! That question would never rise to trouble us again. The cruel cross mocked us. And the jeers of the enemies of our Master lashed us, as with a scourge; but we made no outcry, voiced no protest. The King was dead! The crown, His crown, which we had so plainly visioned, would rest upon no other head. The Kingdom, if it had ever existed, would now disappear.

No one ever experienced darker days than we in the upper room to which we returned after His body had been laid in the tomb. Nothing mattered now. We were sore afraid, and yet no regret would have been felt by any of us if the mob, which had clamored for His crucifixion, had now battered down the doors of our refuge and led us forth to death.

There was nothing to be done. Peter, so ready of speech, was stunned into silence, and we, the Sons of Thunder, could only silently sob out our grief and sorrow. No! We had not understood Him when He had asked us if we were able to share His baptism and

His cup, and when we had answered flippantly, "Yes, we are able." Now we were beginning to understand what He meant when He said to us, "Ye know not what ye ask for, when you ask for the place at my right hand and at my left." This was what He meant.

But our love for Him had not turned to hatred because of our disappointment. No! No! We loved Him still, but sorrow had completely eclipsed all else, and the darkness of unbelief was like a shroud about us.

But night must always recede before the dawn of an approaching day. The hour just before the dawn may be the darkest of the night, but the dawn is coming nearer and is cutting off those sixty minutes one by one. And so it was.

The embalmment was only partly done when night overtook us on the day of His crucifixion. It must now be completed, since the day of the great feast had passed. The task could now be resumed. The women of the company thought of this, and early made their way to the tomb, there to meet with that which, at first, seemed an added ground for grief—the empty sepulcher—but which turned out to be the source of the greatest joy we had yet known—the wondrous revelation of His resurrection!

By repeated and cumulative proofs, we were all convinced that both the King and the Kingdom were eternal; that the cross could not blot out the glory of the crown; that more and yet more the Kingdom would expand until all the kingdoms of the world would be included in the glorious realm of God's only begotten Son, and that the glory and the majesty of the risen Christ would so increase, that not only every earthly

ruler would cast his crown at His feet in acknowledgment of His right to rule, but that every subject of every king would bow in loyalty and love before Him, whom alone God had ever anointed to be, or planned should be, an Universal King.

I thought that I loved Him while He lived among us, but I loved Him more after He had been taken from us and restored to us. I loved Him not so much for what He had said, altho His every word was to me precious and priceless as a jewel. I loved Him, not so much for what He had done for the blind or leprous or the demonized, but I loved Him for what He had done for me—for what He took away from me, and for what He gave me in its place. I am very happy that, in the ages yet to come, I shall be known, not as the quick-tempered, easily angered, selfish, quarreling, intolerant child of the raging storm, but as the disciple whom Jesus loved, the disciple who, under Jesus, had learned to catch men.

Let me say to you, as I have said to many others as I went out from Jerusalem unto the ends of the earth in witnessing for Him, to which joyous task He called me, and for which He prepared me, "What Jesus Christ did for me, He is able, and ready, and willing to do for you. No matter what the besetting sin may be, He can free you from its power and from its pollution, and can transform you from one whom men despise, into a disciple whom both men and He, the Master, can and will love.

VI

SIMON PETER, THE VARIABLE DISCIPLE

"And it came to pass, as He was alone praying, his disciples were with Him; and He asked them saying, 'Who do the people say that I am?'

"They, answering, said 'John the Baptist: but some say Elias, and others say that one of the old prophets is risen again.'

"He said unto them, 'But who say ye that I am?' Peter, answering, said, 'The Christ of God.'

"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple; that disciple was known unto the High Priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the High Priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple which was known unto the High Priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

"Then saith the damsel that kept the door, unto Peter, 'Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?' He answered, 'I am not.'"

VI

SIMON PETER, THE VARIABLE DISCIPLE

I SHALL dismiss with a word my early life story, for it is largely devoid of interest when compared with my later years. It is sufficient to say that I shared with my brother, Andrew, the affection of our parents, the rather rigid early training in the requirements of the Law, and the joys and perils of life upon the Sea of Galilee, whose beauty was unapproached by any other body of water, and which yielded, through the fish with which its waters fairly teemed, a comfortable living to the many fishermen whose homes dotted its gently sloping shores.

I was older, by several years, than my brother. I had married and had bought for myself and my family a home close to Capernaum. We loved it dearly, and had made it very beautiful with flowers that grew in great abundance and required little attention.

Andrew and I differed from each other, as brothers often will, and yet we were alike in many ways, both of us being somewhat temperamental, outspoken, and impetuous. We more than once were forced to pay heavily for our faults, and added years did not change us greatly in this regard.

When word reached our village that a mighty prophet was preaching on the other side of the sea, near to Bethabara, Andrew at once expressed a wish

to go and hear him, and arrangements were made for him to go for a few days. With a company of acquaintances and friends he started on the journey, but he did not return for many days. When he did come, it was with a report rather different from what we had expected; for while John the Baptist had interested him greatly, he was less concerned with him and his message than we had expected. He was thrilled, however, by his experiences with one, Jesus of Nazareth, whom John the Baptist had declared to be the Lamb of God, the Messiah. He had not only John's declaration upon which to base his judgment, but he had talked with this Jesus for several hours, and had left Him fully persuaded that He was the very Christ of God.

Leaving Jesus, he had hurried home to tell me of his convictions, and to convince me that the hope of all Israel had been realized at last. I was not very greatly excited, and for once was rather slow in reaching a conclusion. I listened to his story, but felt no special elation. This fact did not disconcert or discourage him in the least, for he kept urging me to go back with him, find the stranger, talk with Him, and then judge for myself. He was so earnest that at last I agreed to do this, and we started for the vicinity of Cana in Galilee, where Andrew had left Him to come for me. It was not a long journey, and Andrew's enthusiasm, and his joy at having me with him, made the distance seem shorter than it was; and I found that I, too, was becoming more and more eager as the distance grew less.

At last we reached the place where Jesus had been,

where Andrew had parted from Him. He was there. He was younger than I had supposed He would be, and as I drew near, He spoke to me, saying, "Thou art Peter; henceforth thy name shall be Cephas." That word meant, in our tongue, a stone. I wondered why He had so soon seen fit to change my name—a most unusual proceeding, it seemed to me—and I also wondered if there could be any significance in the new name; for, with Israel, mothers' names usually meant more than something by which to individualize a child. We spent several days with Him, and they were days that I shall never forget. While I was there, a young man by the name of Philip came to Jesus, bringing with him, just as Andrew had brought me, a friend, whose name was Nathanael, and Andrew told me that they two had started out together, he to find and bring me; Philip to find and bring his friend to Jesus.

The four of us took advantage of our great opportunity to talk with Jesus while He had abundant time to give to us, and when at last we returned to Capernaum, I was as fully convinced as my brother had been, that Jesus was indeed the Christ of God, Israel's long-waited-for Messiah, and I was as enthusiastic in my faith as he.

The sea and our boats and nets no longer charmed us, as once they had done. We were restless and ill at ease, altho both the catches of fish and the prices obtained in the markets were above the average. The voice that we had heard still rang in our ears, and we longed to listen again and again to His wonderful words.

Several weeks later, quite early in the morning, as

we were washing our nets after a night of fishing, we chanced to look toward the shore, and there, standing not far from the water's edge, we saw Jesus watching us while we worked. We were both surprized and delighted. For a moment He said nothing, just watched us, and then we heard Him say: "Simon, Andrew, come with me, and I will teach you to become fishers of men."

I said a moment ago that both of us were somewhat emotional, temperamental, impetuous; are you surprized when I tell you that we at once left all and followed Him? We could not do otherwise.

In a few moments we stopped again, and Jesus spoke this time to two brothers, friends of ours, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, fishermen too, and just as quickly as we had left ours, they left their boats and nets in charge of their father and followed Him.

In this very simple, natural way, there began that most wonderful relationship that did not end until that day, never to be forgotten by any of us, when we stood together for the last time on this earth, on the Mount of Olives, when He once more charged us to continue to fish for men even tho the task should take us unto the uttermost parts of the earth. But He promised us that whether we should go far or labor near at hand, He would never fail to be with us, and that *we* would never fail; for He would see that the net was always cast on the right side of the ship. He would see to it also that our outspread nets would not be drawn in from the deep or shallow waters empty of fish.

I know that you are deeply interested in what oc-

curred in those few years of my discipleship. I wish that I could relate to you our every experience with Him in detail; but that would require too long a time, so I will take a very few of the outstanding ones, with which I was closely identified, and tell you of these, not in a boastful spirit—for of some of them I could not boast; rather, of them I am deeply ashamed—but my desire is to give you the record of my own, not another's, experience with Jesus.

I shall leave it to others to tell you of the many talks which He had with groups and individuals, other than ourselves. Let me pause just long enough to say that never had my own heart been laid so bare; never had the depths of my own soul been so stirred, as they were repeatedly, as He spoke to us day after day. This was the experience of all of the twelve.

I must not attempt to speak of all the miracles of healing that were performed by Him, even tho I may be qualified better than others to do so; for there were three of us who were particularly favored by Jesus—James and John and I—in the matter of witnessing these wonderful cures, healings, restorations. I would enjoy giving minute details of them all, but I must deny myself and you this pleasure; for it would only serve to draw your attention and interest away from the narrative of my personal experiences with Jesus, as one of the twelve charged with the great task of catching men.

Let me begin by calling your attention to His first great talk, or address, or sermon—whatever you may choose to call it. He began it with us—His disciples—gathered about Him; but long before it was ended,

the whole hillside was covered thick with men and women, who were astonished at His message and His methods. They were in such striking contrast with those to which we had long been accustomed, and in a most impressive way bore out John the Baptist's words concerning Him, "He is so much greater than I, that I am not worthy to loose His sandal thong!"

I shall not attempt to give these experiences of mine in the order of their occurrence, nor in the order of their importance, but at random, just as they come back to me across the years long gone.

We had passed through Bethsaida, a village quite close to Capernaum, where Jesus had opened the eyes of one who was blind, and were resting after passing through Cæsarea Philippi, when Jesus turned to us and said: "While I have been speaking to the multitudes and healing their diseases, you have been mingling with the crowds; you have heard them talking of what they have seen and heard, you have talked with them about me; who do the multitudes say that I, the Son of Man, am?" The answer was not long delayed; for we had been doing just these things. Each of us was ready with some remark that had been made. John reported that he had frequently heard men say that He must be Jeremiah. Nathanael declared that he had heard a number remark that He resembled, in word and bearing, the great prophet of olden time, Isaiah. Some one else had heard more than one say that He was more like Elijah than any one else with whose service to Israel he was acquainted. Still another told Him that he had heard quite a few of those who had heard His forerunner, John the Baptist, speak over

near Bethabara, say that it must be he, risen from the dead and returned to his prophetic task by Jehovah. So we kept on until all had made some reply to His question.

He paused for a moment, as tho He were thinking over these various answers, and then, looking into the face of each one of us with an intense earnestness that none of us had noted before, He asked: "But who do *you* say that I am?" Slowly He uttered this question, and as He spoke, I felt as tho I had been asked to pass judgment upon the most important question that had ever been asked.

I do not know why any one of us should have hesitated to make reply, unless we were overwhelmed by the sense of responsibility that had been thrust upon us. We had all answered that question over and over again in our hearts. Andrew had come to me disclosing his conviction that he had found the Christ of God. Philip had gone to Nathanael, of Cana, and had declared with enthusiasm that he had found Him of whom Moses and the Prophets had written—Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, the Messiah. When Nathanael saw Jesus, he had instantly cried out, "My Lord and my God!" I too had been convinced before I gave up my business in Capernaum to become a follower, at His invitation, that I was not deceived in Him or in His claim to be the Christ of God.

But now, no one was ready with an answer. Surely no one of us felt that our first judgment of Him had been faulty. We sat silent before Him. He spoke no word—just waited for us to speak out of our own hearts, uninfluenced by any appeal or argument from

Him, the conviction that we had reached concerning Him. An answer must be given. The nature of the query demanded one.

The situation became exceedingly tense. Still Jesus waited for the answer, our answer, to that question which was freighted with such tremendous consequences to us, and to Him. "Who do *you* say that I am?"

I felt the muscles of my throat moving as they do when speech is uttered. I felt my lips moving. I heard the sound of a voice, but it did not seem to be my own. I heard these words spoken, as tho coming from a great distance: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

No one else spoke. For a long time the same tense silence prevailed. Even Jesus made no immediate comment. Then He spoke, saying, "Blessed art thou, Simon, because God has given to you these words, His answer to my question. No man had the power to reveal this truth. God has spoken to you, and through you, Simon. And, Simon, upon this confession that I am the Christ, the Son of the Living God—upon this act of confessing me, confessing audibly before men that I am the Christ—I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

I felt very happy because I had been given, and had made, the answer to His question that He had desired, and had received His approval; but we were all greatly perplexed when He charged us that we should tell no man that He was the Christ.

In the days that followed, He again confused us by talking freely, and frequently, of His death—His

death, not by natural means or from natural causes, but by the cross! We could not understand this at all, and we all remonstrated with Him, telling Him that these things simply could not be, could not happen to the Christ of God; for it had been written in the Prophets that the Messiah would live always and would rule without end. But He insisted that they not only could, but would, occur. Nevertheless, we were not convinced.

We remained in this northern territory for about eight days. By easy stages we approached one of our highest mountains, Mount Hermon, whose sides rose gradually from the level plains about it until the foothills were reached; then more precipitately, until its snow-capped summit was before us. It was late in the afternoon when we stood at its base, and the soft light of the setting sun turned the snow on its summit into a crown of burnished gold; the shadows, as they deepened on the mountainside, only served to make the sunlit summit more gloriously beautiful.

All of us were somewhat weary and hungry, but after the evening meal was ended, Jesus called John and James and me to Him, and asked us to climb up the mountainside with Him. We could not refuse such a request from Him, and were soon on our way, leaving nine of our company stretched out on the richly sodded earth of the foothills.

With Jesus we climbed toward the top. When we reached the snow-line we stopped. The climb had wearied us. Night had now fallen about us, and, not even suspecting why we had come, unless it was to

be with Jesus during one of His nights in prayer, we three were soon asleep. But we did not slumber long.

We were awakened by the shining about us of a brilliant light. It was not the light of a new day, we knew that. It was a light not unlike, and yet not wholly like, the light from the moon and stars. It was glistening white, and the snow reflected it in all its beauty. We were greatly awed, and, rising to our knees, bowed reverently, yet very much afraid. Then, as we raised our eyes, our fear having passed somewhat, we saw a most wonderful thing. Jesus, who had climbed the mountain with us, was far above us in the midst of this marvelous light, while just a little below Him, and on either side, we saw men, who were revealed to us to be Moses and Elijah. They, too, were in the midst of this strange light. Neither they nor Jesus seemed to be in the flesh, subject as they would have been to the forces of nature. They seemed to be ethereal, moving freely, suspended in the air; and from out this canopy of light there came to us voices, and as we listened, still in great fear, we heard Moses and Elijah and Jesus talking about His death, describing it just as Jesus had described it to us on the day when I had given answer to His question—"Who do you say that I am?"—His death upon the cross.

How long we remained prostrate upon the ground I do not know, but at last I felt the touch of Jesus and heard Him saying to us, "Fear not. Come, let us be going." We rose and began the descent to the place where we had left the nine, and as we went down the mountainside Jesus again made of us what seemed to me a strange request: that we tell no man what we had

seen until He had risen from the dead. And again we were sorely puzzled to know what He meant when He spoke of His "rising from the dead."

We reached the level from which we had started our upward climb to find the disciples, other than we, surrounded by a large crowd which seemed to be having much sport jeering at our companions, while pointing to something that was in the midst of the circle—something that we could not see.

Suddenly from out the group a man made his way, coming toward us running, and when he had reached us, he told us a pitiful story about his son, who had been, almost from babyhood, possessed by an evil spirit; told us that he had appealed to the nine to heal him, but that they had failed; and then he pleaded with Jesus to do something, if He could, to relieve the lad. The crowd opened as we came up, and Jesus by a word cast out the demon, healed the boy, and restored him to his father. The crowd quickly scattered, and we continued our journey, returning to Capernaum.

From the beginning of our association with Jesus, the nature of His kingdom, of which He had often spoken to us, and of which John the Baptist had spoken in his preaching, was discussed by us twelve. There was but one answer always. It would be a world-power. We were also agreed that we would be given no common places in that kingdom; but there were twelve very clear and very forceful and very different answers to the question as to which should hold the chief place, the place next to the King.

I am ashamed to admit now, but I must admit it, that I had not less than twelve good reasons to sup-

port my claim to the seat at the King's right hand, not the least of which was the fact that I had made the reply to the question of Jesus—the reply that had drawn from Him such unqualified approval and had led Him to declare me blessed, and the agent in God's revelation of this great truth. Also, the very evident preference that Jesus showed to John and to James and to me was strongly pleaded in support.

We never let Jesus hear our disputes, but on more than one occasion He gave evidence of a strong suspicion, or a real knowledge, of our mental state. It seems strange to me now that we should have so misconstrued the prophecies concerning the kingdom as we did, but the most of us, and of our race, had accepted the interpretation given us by the Sanhedrin, so we were possibly not so much to blame. But our quarrels over the chief place could not be laid to the charge of any one but ourselves, and to our selfish ambitions.

As time passed, none of us could blind our eyes to the change that had taken place in the attitude of the multitudes toward Jesus. In the first place, the numbers that attended Him were nowhere nearly so large as when He at first began to teach. They had changed, too, in their character. In the early days the common people were in the large majority; the officials of our people were very rarely in attendance. Now, a great many of the Scribes and Pharisees and Priests were always among the crowds. Another change, more noticeable than any other, was in the attitude toward the teaching of Jesus. In those first months, people listened in reverence to Him, as tho the voice of God

Himself was being heard; but now there was open hostility to Him. There was challenge of His right and authority, and of the correctness of His interpretation. There was argument and the putting of hard questions to Him in an effort to get Him into trouble with Rome or Israel, and we were astonished, time and again, at the way Jesus escaped their snares.

We were greatly disturbed and distressed by these changes, for which we could see no cause or reason; but Jesus was undisturbed. More and more frequently, however, He spoke to us of His death upon the cross.

Toward the close of the third year of our following of Jesus, the time of the Feast of the Passover approached. We had never missed this great feast. Jesus Himself was careful to attend all of these great religious festivals, so we turned our faces toward the city of the Great King. We arrived at Bethany, where Mary and Martha and Lazarus lived, in whose home we had been so many times happily entertained. Jesus had so recently raised Lazarus from the dead that the home was visited by large numbers of people anxious to hear the story of this great miracle from the lips of those who knew it best, and to see Lazarus. From these and others we learned of the order of the Sanhedrin that Jesus' whereabouts should be revealed to them. We were all apprehensive of the outcome of their plans until the Sabbath day preceding the feast.

On that wonderful day all doubts and fears were swept from our minds and hearts. The certainty of His triumph over Rome and over His personal foes was so firmly established that we were simply delirious. Words fail me as I attempt to tell you of that glorious

entrance of Jesus, with us close beside Him, crying in the words of the prophet of God, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." An innumerable company on that day gave Him a madly enthusiastic welcome to the city of David, and to His throne site. With waving palm branches, with the bright garments of the feast-period, with the glad voices and the happy faces, a picture was created that can never be dimmed or blotted from my memory. Yet that day closed in a way utterly different from what we had expected. For at its close the crowd had left us, and, all alone, we, with Jesus, went back to Bethany. We disciples were overwhelmed with a depression and an apprehension of more dreadful things whose shadows were dimly seen on the days just ahead of us.

The days that followed were spent largely at Bethany, and in quiet retreat. In mid-afternoon of the day preceding the feast, Jesus sent John and me into the city with directions for locating the place for our celebration of the feast, and an order to make all things ready for the rest of our company, who would come to the city in the early evening. In the home of one of our little company of believers, we made ready, and just as night was falling Jesus and the ten came to the upper room.

From the attitude of the ten, we could easily see that something was wrong. We had set water pots, as was the custom in that day, just inside the door, for the washing of the travel-dust from the feet of those who entered, or for other ablutions which should precede the taking of food. We noticed that no one made

use of these accommodations, but that they went quickly and took places upon the couches about the table. We soon divined the cause—the old dispute about the first place in the kingdom—and we were affected by it to such a degree that neither John nor I would stoop to play the part of the servant farther than we had already taken it in the preparation of the feast. We, too, hurried to the remaining places at the table. John took the couch next to Jesus, while I was forced to take the one across the table from Him. We waited for Jesus to say the prescribed words which would open the feast, but, instead, He rose from the table, laid aside the outer garment that He wore, girded Himself with a towel, just as a slave would have done and, taking a basin of water from the vessels at the door, He went to the end of the table and began to wash the feet of the waiting disciples. Never was a company of men so humbled. Not a word was spoken, but every man's face showed his feelings as the water and the towel in the hands of Jesus touched his feet.

Judas reclined on the couch at Jesus' right, just behind Him. Beginning with him, and passing to John, and on down the table, He made His way. I was farthest from Him, and by the time He reached me, I was so wrought up that I cried, with tears streaming down my cheeks, "Master, thou shalt never wash my feet!" He stood for a moment at my couch, and said in a very quiet voice: "Simon, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me." Separated from Jesus! No part in Him! Never must this tragedy occur! And I cried, "Lord, dear Lord, wash not my feet only, but my hands and

my head; wash me thoroughly, that my connection with Thee may never be weakened, let alone be broken." And He washed and dried my feet as He had the feet of the others of the twelve.

Then the words were spoken by Jesus that permitted us to celebrate, in God's prescribed way, the feast that commemorated our liberation from bondage in Egypt. The unleavened bread, the lamb, the contents of the dish into which each dipped his morsels of bread, and the bitter herbs, were all eaten in silence. When we were through, Jesus again stood and began to speak to us in words that were heavy with sorrow, and seemingly wholly out of place at this time of joyful commemoration; but as He continued, and the real burden upon His heart was declared—that He would this night be betrayed by one of us, His disciples, and that before the period of feasting was over, He would be nailed to the cross and taste of the cup of death—we were dumb with astonishment and grief. "One of us," He had said. In a broken voice John asked, "Master, is it I?" Each in turn took up John's words, but Jesus made no reply other than to say that one who dipped bread with Him into the dish, close by, would commit the sin of disloyalty.

In a few moments, Judas rose from his place beside Jesus and hurried to the door, Jesus saying to him as he went, "What thou doest, do quickly." After he had gone, Jesus took bread and a cup which He filled, and, breaking the bread, He gave a fragment to each of us, saying to us, "This is my body, broken for you." And to each of us He passed the cup in turn, saying as He did so, "This cup is the new testament in my blood;

drink ye all of it." And when the cup had completed the circuit of the table, the Master said, "This do ever and always, in remembrance of me."

After this new ceremony had been completed, Jesus began to talk to us; and as He talked, it seemed to me that I had never heard words so saturated with tenderness, so crowded with love and gracious concern, so overweighted with sorrow, and yet filled with hope and promise and assurance. I had heard His every public utterance. I had been present when He talked with Nicodemus, and with others, apart from the throngs; but I had never heard Him when there was present more of that spirit which proved Him to be the Son of God, the Messiah, than here in the upper room.

And the prayer that followed! We had been often with Him in His night-long periods of prayer, but He had never prayed at these times audibly; here in the upper room He prayed aloud, and as we listened, He seemed to lay bare before God, the Father, and us, every secret recess of His broken heart. When He came to His remembrance of and His petition for us, His followers, I can not picture for you, nor can you picture for yourself, what His plea for us accomplished. My own heart felt that it was being laid upon the altar; yes, that it was being presented in the Holy of Holies to the God of Israel, with the urge that He take it under His protection; that He guard it from immediate and remote dangers; that He might receive it back again in the day of His Kingdom's triumph, that His glory might be witnessed and shared

by those who had witnessed His deep humiliation and suffering.

During His brief talk with us, He had warned us that all of us would forsake Him in the time of His greatest need. I could not let this go unchallenged, and I cried out:

"Lord, tho all the rest of the twelve shall forsake thee—tho, as Thou hast said, one of us will betray thee—I will never forsake thee, and I am not the one who will deliver thee into the hands of thine enemies. . . . Why, Lord, thou knowest that I am willing to die for thee."

I meant every word that I had spoken, but Jesus said to me:

"Peter, will you die for me? You mean what you say, Peter, I have no doubt; but, Peter, this night, before the cock shall announce the coming of a new day, you will deny me three times."

"Never, Lord, never shall this be," I cried.

We sang together and then went out to the Garden of Gethsemane, where we frequently went when in the city—a beautiful garden it was, and Jesus loved to pray here—and it was here that the betrayal by one of us—Judas Iscariot—took place.

I shall not take time to pass judgment on Judas for his act. Within a few brief hours, he had passed upon himself harsher judgment than I, maybe, would have passed then or might pass now.

From the Garden Jesus was hurried—we following afar; for at His arrest we had all forsaken Him, but had turned when we realized our cowardice, coming at length into the presence of the Sanhedrin, where He

was condemned for blasphemy and sentenced to death upon the cross.

It was here that that occurred which I had declared would never, never, come to pass—by threefold denial of Him as my Master.

To dwell upon this sad event is too painful for me; but let me say to you that Jesus was not mistaken in His judgment of me. Under the pressure of danger and threats I did say three times—the last time emphasizing my statements with curses—that I did not know Jesus, and that I was not one of His followers.

I have no excuse but that of fear of physical pain, which overwhelmed me at a time when I was greatly confused by what had occurred so recently.

I had heard, after my first denial, a cock crowing out in the night somewhere, and again after my third vehement disclaimer of any knowledge of Jesus. Then I remembered the words of Jesus, and my heart was broken at their fulfilment. I hurried out into the night, which was fast giving place to the approaching day, and throwing myself down upon the ground, I wept bitterly.

Morning came, after this awful night, and just as day was fully come, I saw them leading Jesus in the direction of Pilate's court. I waited, and then I saw them leaving this place of trial, and, with Jesus bearing upon His shoulders, bloodstained now, a cross, I saw them turn their steps toward Golgotha, the place of execution. There I saw them nail Him to the cross.

Oh, I wanted to speak to Him for just a moment, and beg His forgiveness for my denial of Him, but there was no chance; the soldiers would not let me

near the cross. I waited until they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in the tomb. I went with the company, very few of whom knew what I had done, to the upper room where we waited for—we knew not what.

It was here, early on the first day of the week, that word was brought to us that He had risen from the dead—that the grave was empty! John and I ran as fast as we could to the grave and found that it was indeed empty. We hurried back, and told what we had seen. While we waited, others came in, to whom the risen Lord had appeared, and they told us that Jesus had commanded them to tell the disciples that He had risen, and to tell *me* to go into Galilee—that I would see Him there. I went to Galilee, but others went with me, and I found no opportunity, such as I craved, to fall at His blessed feet and ask forgiveness for my sin. I was happy and yet very unhappy.

The opportunity came at last, when some of us returned to the Sea of Galilee and went out on the sea for a night of fishing. We caught nothing all night. In the morning, as we were pulling in to the shore, hoping that none of our former friends would see our empty nets and boat, we saw some one standing on the shore, but we could not see clearly enough to identify Him. He called to us: "Children, have ye any meat?" We called back, "We have taken nothing all night." Again He called to us, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find." And we cast the net and it was filled at once, so that it began to break. I looked again toward the shore; so did John, and he said to me, "It is the Lord."

I forgot all else, and plunged into the sea, determined to have one moment alone with Jesus to ask His forgiveness. The others came slowly, and when they had reached the shore, what I had wanted most, I had received—the words of forgiveness and restoration to His favor. Again to me and to all the rest of the company Jesus committed the care of the body of believers, whom He designated "His sheep," "His lambs."

No condemnation of my denial can ever be more harsh than my own. But Jesus foresaw and foretold not only my sin, but the sins of others who might have even less of apparent justification—if there is ever justification for any sin—than I, when He said: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

But I found pardon. So can you—from Him who granted it to me. And let me add that it can be found *nowhere else,* and can be given by *none other* than Jesus; for there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus, God's only Son, man's only Redeemer.

VII

PETER, AFTER PENTECOST

"And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

"And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

"But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

"I was in the city of Joppa, praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descending, as it had been a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

"Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

"And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay, and eat.

"But I said, Not so, Lord; for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

"But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

"And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

"And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cæsarea unto me.

"And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover, these six brethren accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house:

"And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

"And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

"Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

"Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?

"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

VII

PETER, AFTER PENTECOST

IN the hearts and minds of all the close associates of Jesus, and in the minds of many others who had not followed Him or even believed in Him in His days of teaching and healing, the truth of His resurrection from the dead had become firmly established. It was still a subject of conversation among us and was regarded as the miracle of miracles by us and by all to whom it was mentioned; but the shock and the surprize of it had somewhat waned.

For some reason, not understood by us, Jesus did not remain with us constantly, as before the crucifixion. Days would pass without our seeing Him, or hearing from Him; and then, for a little time, He would be with us, and we would rejoice in His return and in the restored companionship. But His absences from us were much more extended than His meetings with us.

At the first, we of the inner group had clung together and had remained, for the main part, in Jerusalem or Bethany, close to the meeting-place that meant so much to us all.

We knew that we were to be witnesses for Him, for He had told us so; but no one of us felt certain either of our message or of the manner and the place where

it was to be delivered first, nor when we were to begin our task.

Days of just waiting idly about palled upon us, and we at last began to break up into smaller groups and to drift apart. Some, who had lost their fear of personal violence from the enemies of Jesus, went from the upper room to their own homes in the city or in the regions near by.

Continued inaction caused us to become restless, and the seven of us from the region of Capernaum decided to revisit our homes and our families, from whom we had now been separated for an unusually long time.

We started northward, and at last came within sight of the Sea of Galilee. It is hard to describe the feelings that we all experienced as we looked again upon its beauty. All our old love for it returned intensified an hundredfold.

The beautiful day was just drawing to its close. We could see the boats and their crews pushing out from the shore. We could hear the songs that we used to sing when we were a part of this busy, happy company, as they came floating softly and sweetly to us over the rippling waters, making an appeal to us that was overwhelming.

We had not been in our own boats, or on the sea, except when we crossed it at Jesus' command, for almost three years—since Jesus called us to follow Him —since we began to study to become fishers of men. In this new task we had caught little or nothing; for we had cast the net rarely. To us it now seemed, in spite of all, that this time had been wasted, so little

had been accomplished where we had hoped for so much. The sea called to us, not in wooing words of invitation, but in tones of command, bidding us to return to her and to the life in which we had all been so successful.

The lure was too great. We did not want our old friends and neighbors to know that we had returned from our fruitless mission; nor did we care to hear the remarks which would likely be made concerning men who had given up a certainty for something that was so visionary as they regarded now our following Jesus; so we waited until night had fallen. No one had said anything, but there was a striking unanimity of action when at last I turned to them and said, "I am going fishing." That was what they had been waiting for—a suggestion or a leader—and they at once replied: "We are going with you."

We quickly found a boat, and nets, and quietly slipped out to sea. It was the same wonderful sea. Rowing tired no one of us; rather, we sensed a strong exhilaration. The places where we used to draw in such great catches were again visited. Our old skill in casting and drawing the nets returned to us automatically, but for some reason our night's efforts were a total failure.

Andrew and I, and the two sons of Zebedee, had always been regarded as the best of the large number of firms who drew their living from the sea, and we had always felt a pride in our reputation.

There were times when, try as we would, we, with others, would return to land with very small catches or with no fish at all to show for our night of toil; but

what was one's fortune was the fortune of all. When one caught an abundance of fish, all came to shore with something more than an average load. When one caught very few, none of the group had many in their boats. But rare indeed was it for a few to return to the shore with their boats far out of the water, while all the rest were loaded to the water's edge. Sometimes this did occur, however. But on this night, as we drifted unrecognized in the vicinity of other groups, we could hear the cries of delight as net after net was drawn in full of fish. Every one seemed to have been specially favored, but we had cast again and again and had drawn the net in empty. We could not understand this, and finally becoming discouraged and ashamed, we decided to make for some quiet landing-place where we might get ashore and hurry into Capernaum, and to our homes, before we were recognized by our old comrades and were made the butt of their jibes.

With this in mind, we left the fishing grounds before it became day, before the other boats and crews thought of quitting for the night; but just as we were heading our boat for the shore, which we could see dimly in the dusk of the early dawn, we heard a voice from shore saying, "Children have ye any meat?" We thought it some one in the neighborhood who wished to procure meat for the morning meal, and we answered "No." Again the voice came to us over the water, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find." Without any thought of success, but in the hope that maybe the stranger, from his place upon the shore, had seen what we could not see—the evi-

dence of a school of fish—we cast the net once more, and to our amazement it filled at once, so that it began to break, and with all our combined strength we could not land our catch.

John was close to me, and when he saw what we all could see, that the catch was really a miracle, he turned and looked toward the shore. I too looked, but recognized no one. John's eyes were keener than mine, and, turning to me, he said, "Peter, it is the Lord." He was right. I too saw the Master standing by a little fire which He had lighted close to the shore.

Why had He come to the Sea of Galilee just at this time? Why had our efforts resulted in failure all through the night? Why had His presence brought success just when failure was so complete?

I did not answer all these questions then, but I have asked them over and over again of myself and have come to a solution that satisfies me. I think that I know what was in His marvelous mind. Shall I give you my answers? I think I will, and then I will go on with my story of the meeting.

I believe that Jesus came to the Sea of Galilee just at the time He did because He knew, as we did not, the danger to us and to His kingdom in the appeal of the old life upon the sea, the life that we had known before He entered into ours; and He had come just at the crucial time. I do not know that He had been there all the night. I will not say that it was His miraculous power that, all through the night, kept the fish from entering our nets while they entered others, as it was clearly His miraculous power that had just a few moments before caused them to enter in such great

numbers into the net we had cast; I will not say it, but I have my own convictions about it.

I believe that Jesus had come to the sea at this critical time to prevent our return to the old life at the cost of forsaking the new life to which He had called us three years before. He may have had in mind His own experience. You will remember that at the close of the temptation, the Devil showed Him the kingdoms of the world—all of them in all time—and had offered them to Him, if He would turn from the cross and take the crown from his hand by worshiping him for just one brief moment. This last appeal closed the testing period, and the Devil left Him for a season, but came back again and again to lure Him from the cross and from His work as the Messiah of God.

He came back to us at this time to prevent the three years' instructions which He had given us, and which He could not now give to others—instruction in the art of catching men—going for naught.

I think that He came to us to show us fishermen that even in the work in which we thought ourselves expert, He could save us from failure, and to impress us with the fact that in the task to which He had called us—catching men, which seemed to us at the time so complete a failure because of the cross—would surely, with Him to give precise directions as to when and where to cast the net, prove to be a successful enterprise, surpassing our wildest dreams. He had come because it was the hour of our greatest danger and of our greatest need of His presence.

How I plunged into the sea and swam to shore

ahead of the rest, who came slowly dragging the net with its heavy load; and how, in the silence of the new day, I had a little time there alone with Jesus—time enough to acknowledge my sin of denial and to ask Him for forgiveness—I have already told you.

After breaking our fast, with Jesus as our host, we did not go on to Capernaum, but returned with Him to Jerusalem, where we remained closely associated together until He was taken from us. Before the last parting, He charged us to go even unto the uttermost parts of the world, and to all peoples, with the proclamation of God's world-embracing love and His one and only remedy for sin and requirement for everlasting life—belief in Jesus, the crucified but risen Son of God. At the same time He warned us to remain in Jerusalem until we had received power from on high to tell His gospel as we should tell it. Nor did He give us any idea as to the length of our wait; simply, "until ye receive" the power.

While we stood about Him on the Mount of Olives, He was taken from us, and we saw Him no more except in visions and dreams; and yet we never seemed to be alone.

We went back to Jerusalem and gathered all the believers in the city into the upper room in the home where the last supper had been celebrated. Here we began our period of waiting for the blessing of ability to witness for Him. With us were a number of women who had been in our company, among them the mother of Jesus. This did not impress us as unusual or improper, tho the practises of the old faith had kept men and women apart in the services of the Tabernacle.

These women had rendered very great help to Jesus and to us in the days of His ministry.

The time was spent in prayer. We had been taught by Jesus to pray, and in these days the hearts of all of us were laid bare, and petitions that had no pattern were uttered and heard. For ten days and nights we waited and prayed. Then came the day of another of our feasts—the Feast of Pentecost—to which, as to the Feast of the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles, every Jew must come. The Pentecostal Feast was so called because it completed seven full weeks from the Passover, or "fifty days," and marked the ending of the harvest of the late grains.

The city, of course, was crowded, as it was when Jesus was crucified. Israelites and proselytes were there from all nations. We were up early, as usual, expecting to continue as we had been for these ten days in prayer, but, of course, to partake of the pleasures and join in the religious exercises of the feast; for we were still Jews. No one of us was in the least suspicious of anything unusual occurring, and yet, day had hardly come upon us when we had reason to feel that the time of our waiting was ended—that the time of our visitation by the promised power was at hand.

Suddenly, we felt an overwhelming sense of the presence of our Master, tho He was not visible. We knew that He was in our midst. Then, as we looked one at the other, we saw a most startling thing; for above the head of each one of us there glowed a two-pointed flame, as of fire. There was no sign of burning, no pain, but each of us felt a thrill such as I can not describe. We began to speak to one another; each

was sure that the promise was fulfilled, and every one of us was consumed with a desire to go forth and speak. Memory was quickened. The words and deeds of Jesus, many that had slipped from us in the months since they were spoken or performed, came rushing back to us, and with them came an understanding of how to use them in persuading men. Our understanding, which had been more or less stunned by the cross, became clear. All doubt and uncertainty had disappeared, and with their going, slowness of speech and lack of training departed from us. We were ready.

But to whom should we speak? Where should we go to begin our testimony? These questions were not long in being answered; for, unknown to us, the One who had prepared us for our part was furnishing us with our first audience. Outside, as strange things had been happening as with us in the upper room; for there was heard all over the city a sound as of rushing wind, not like an ordinary storm, affecting equally every part of the city, but such a sound as a storm would produce, localized, focused upon the room where we were assembled. It was so unusual that, from all parts of the city, residents and visitors came running to discover its meaning. When the door was opened by us, the streets were full of people who showed great concern over this strange condition.

Again, if you care to do so, charge me with impetuosity; but what I did now was not like some of the less creditable things that are charged to me. Like my confession of faith in Jesus in the early days of our association with Him, the act was prompted by some power outside myself.

The people's upturned faces appealed to me—they were so eager to know what this strange noise might mean. No one else seemed ready to give a reply, and so, stepping forward a pace or two from the rest, I began to tell them what had occurred and why it had happened. I reminded them that this outpouring of supernatural power was but the fulfilment of a prophecy of Joel, and with very little time taken in preliminaries, I reminded them of the events that had taken place when they were last present in the city, fifty days before—the betrayal and the crucifixion of Jesus. This awful sin I charged home to them. In ringing tones, and with the greatest confidence in its truth, I declared that His resurrection from the dead had occurred, and that we had seen Him after His resurrection. This was followed by the declaration that God—Jehovah—had made Jesus both Lord and Christ.

I saw that they were deeply stirred, not with hatred, as they had been at the words of Jesus Himself, for they knew that I had spoken the truth. The awfulness of their guilt had come upon them, and they cried out, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" Then I offered them what I myself had experienced—the forgiveness by this same Jesus, in return for acceptance of Him as the Christ of God. About three thousand of this company made this most solemn confession of their faith and acceptance, and became a part of us.

Not all were Israelites, but there was a mixture of races, all of whom, by the mercy of God, had heard the message in their own tongues—for the power to

speak in languages not studied by us was given to us on this memorable day. And once more we knew what Jesus meant when He had said to us, "I have other sheep which are not of this fold."

I was astounded by the results, as were others of the company; but the faith of all of us in the last promise of Jesus was greatly strengthened—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"—and each of us who had been with Him for those three years felt that His instruction in the method of "catching men" had not been fruitless. Especially was this true when we looked into this net, the first that we had cast, and found it full.

The city was stirred by the report of this great gathering almost as much as it had been by the report of the resurrection of Jesus. We were not long in discovering that what had been said had been reported to the priests and scribes, and to the enemies of Jesus in general, and that they had been deeply incensed; but we were not at this time to feel the heavy hand of opposition.

Some days later occurred the healing of the impotent man, who was lying at the Gate Beautiful asking for alms as John and I went up to the Temple at the hour of prayer. He was hoping for gifts of money from passers-by, and he made his appeal to us.

We had no money to give, but there was something so pathetic in his condition, and he was so sincere, that both John and I were deeply impressed. Again that peculiar sensation came to me—the feeling that this was an opportunity—and, stopping in front of him, I said: "I have none of those things for which you

ask, but I have something that will mean more to you than silver or gold; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." And he leaped to his feet and went with us, rejoicing at every step, into the Temple. A crowd gathered quickly in the Temple porch, for they realized that a great miracle had been performed before their eyes.

Once more I spoke to them, telling them that it was nothing in us, but that this man had been healed by the power of the name of Jesus Christ, whom they and their leaders had put to death, but whom God had glorified. We called upon them to repent of this sin, that mercy might be found with God for this denial of His holy Son. More believed than on the Day of Pentecost, and the second casting of the net had not been in vain.

But while we were speaking this time, many of the priests and Sadducees came near, and they became very angry, because we had preached Jesus and His resurrection from the dead. They were not long in expressing their disapproval, for John and I were at once arrested and cast into prison.

We were not unprepared for this; for Jesus had warned us that if they would persecute Him, they would persecute us; and He even went so far as to tell us that the days would come when men would kill us and think they were doing the will of God.

The next day the rulers and scribes and elders, and both Annas and Caiaphas, who had condemned Jesus to the cross, came together. They sent for us and asked by what authority we had spoken as we had; and they charged us not to speak again in the name of Jesus; for

they were deeply stirred, not by the miracle alone, but by the widespread results of it, and by the words spoken by us to the people, in which we charged them with the murder of the Christ.

They could do nothing else with us, and after we had refused to be controlled by their ruling, they let us go. We hurried to our anxious friends and told them of our experiences. They were overjoyed, and once more we all felt the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit upon us as at Pentecost.

A very trying day came to us soon after this. In our new group, as in the old, unworthy men and women found place. Many of the company brought their property into a common fund for the use of the Church, and much good was done; but sin entered into the hearts of some—sin which called for the most terrible penalty that I was led to inflict. Two, who had conspired together to lie to the Lord, were stricken dead on the spot where their falsehoods had been told; but such sad experiences were rare among us.

The rapid increase of the followers of Jesus was regarded with great concern by the leaders of Israel; they became not only concerned, but bitterly hostile, and again John and I were put into prison; but the doors of the prison were opened in spite of the bars and locks and guards, and when we were sent for, instead of finding us in prison, they found us in the Temple telling the same wonderful truths to all who would hear. Once more we declared to them our intention to obey the commands of their God and our God rather than their edicts.

They did not know what to do with us, but followed

the advice of Gamaliel, one of the wisest of their number, who counseled them to let us and our work alone, warning them against fighting against God, if our work was from Him. He assured them that if it was not of God, it would come to an early end.

This ended that form of opposition, and we had rest from persecution until those most terrible days under the leadership of Saul of Tarsus. During that period many perished, and most of the believers were scattered for safety to more or less remote parts of our country; but wherever these went, they bore splendid witness for our Lord, and there were always hearers who were ready to accept their testimony.

One of the most remarkable of these turnings of the people from the old to the new faith occurred under the leadership of Philip, who had gone down into Samaria, where, in spite of the centuries-old feud between Jew and Samaritan, he led an astonishing number to accept Christ as their Messiah. Word of this great ingathering came to us at Jerusalem, and we could not believe it. John and I were sent down to investigate and report back to the church at Jerusalem. We found the reports supported by the facts, and we were even more surprized when we saw with our own eyes the favor of God conferred upon Philip and his converts—in the receipt, by them, of the Holy Spirit, even as we ourselves had received Him.

It was not long after this that Saul, with his armed company, began to visit the outlying districts and to persecute our associates. One day we were amazed to hear, however, that his company of persecutors had returned to Jerusalem without him—that they had

left him behind at Damascus, because he had openly confessed that he had seen Jesus on the road to that city, and had determined that henceforth he would preach the new faith instead of persecuting those who followed it.

Few of us believed this rumor, and only after months had passed did many of us think that it was other than a trick by which the names of our companions might be the more easily learned, and their persecution made more certain. But at last Barnabas, a brother very greatly loved by us all, and in whom we had every confidence, brought Saul—or Paul, as he was now called—to us, and we listened to his recital of his experiences, and at last welcomed him to our company; but we were yet to learn what a great triumph for our Master had been won when this hot-headed yet brilliant Pharisee had become a follower, with us, of the risen Christ.

He left us very soon and we saw and heard little of him or from him for some months; but later we held him in very high regard; for none was a more faithful witness, none a more tireless laborer, none a more patient sufferer for the Church than was he.

Becoming a follower of Christ or even an apostle of the Lord does not signify a sudden and complete removal of old prejudices, or of long and firmly established—tho mistaken—notions. We sometimes forget this, but we have to admit it. For, as we stood with Jesus on the Mount of Olives, and He spoke to us those last words, "Go ye into all the world and preach my Gospel to every creature"; or even before this, when Jesus said to Nicodemus, "For God so loved the

world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life"; and again, at Pentecost, when we were given the proof that salvation through Christ was for all men, when Parthians, Medes, Elamites and others professed their faith in the Christ whom I presented to them, and when John and I saw the turning to God of the Samaritans under Philip's preaching, we ought to have realized that the Gospel given to us was an universal gospel; that it was a message to, and a blessing for, all those who might accept it; but we did not, except in a very limited degree. The conviction lay very deep in our natures that the Jew was, and under any and all circumstances must continue to be, the chosen and favored people of Jehovah. Thus, little by little, I found myself showing a marked preference for the Israelite, and less and less consideration for the Gentile. Our excluding ideas of God's mercy had a tap-root that reached down through the centuries and fastened itself around the very heart of Abraham, and we had to learn that God had no intention of confining our labors, or His love and mercy and blessing through the risen Christ, to any one group of people or to any one tribe or nation; that the children of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were no more the beneficiaries of His gracious provision for redemption than the meanest of the descendants of Hagar who might hear and believe.

This lesson was particularly hard for me to learn, but I learned it at first-hand and in a most striking manner. I had thought a good deal about Samaria, as I was visiting churches in a number of cities. At last

I reached Joppa, where the Church had gained a following and was firmly established. While here, I was the guest, for a number of days, of a tanner named Simon, and it was during my stay with him that God taught me that Christ died for all men and that all men might be saved through Him. It was near noon, and while waiting for the midday meal I had gone up to the flat roof of the house. While there, I fell into a sleep or trance, and saw a vision of a sheet let down from heaven—held like a great pocket by the corners—and as it came before me, it stopped, and I looked into it and saw all manner of unclean beasts of the earth, things unlawful for us to eat as food. Then I heard a voice saying to me, "Rise, Peter, slay and eat." I was amazed and replied, "Not so, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever touched my lips." This was true, for I had always been very rigid in my observance of the Law. But the voice again spoke, saying, "What God hath made clean, do not thou call common or unclean." And the sheet was drawn up into heaven whence it had come.

I wondered what it could mean, but I soon learned; for before I had descended from the roof, a knock was heard at the door, and when it was opened, three men stood there, who said they had come from Cæsarea, about forty miles to the north, from their master, Cornelius. Their master had been instructed by God in a vision, they added, to send to Joppa and to inquire for me at the home of Simon the tanner. They had been sent at once, and they prayed that I would accompany them to the home of their master, who was a most worthy and generous and religious man. All

doubt was dispelled by the Lord, who bade me go with them.

I went at once, and when we reached Cæsarea we found a great company gathered at the home of this Roman centurion, Cornelius. He received me very graciously—in fact, he would have worshiped me if I had not forbidden it—and told me of his own vision, with which he had at once complied. Expressing great pleasure that I had come so speedily, he asked me to speak to them the message that God wanted them to hear. I could not refuse to obey such a clear command from God, even tho my host was a Gentile and an officer in the Government which every Jew hated. So I told them of my association with Jesus, of His ministry to men, and of His crucifixion and resurrection; and while I was speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard me. Those who had accompanied me from Joppa, those of the old faith, were amazed when they saw the uncircumcized receive the gift of God as we had received that same blessing at Pentecost. No one could doubt that this was a work of God, and they were baptized in the name of Jesus.

I tarried here for some days, instructing them in the new way. Upon my return to Jerusalem I found that what I had done had traveled rapidly, and I was harshly criticized; but when I told the whole story, criticism ceased, and they rejoiced in the knowledge that God had granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life.

The Gospel was carried far, to Cyprus and Cyrene, and to other parts of the world; but at last the Church, in a happy meeting, set apart—by the laying on of

hands at the direction of the Holy Ghost—two most earnest, consecrated and congenial disciples, Barnabas and Paul, to the work of ministering to the scattered churches and to unvisited peoples of the earth, that these might know of the wonderful provision of God for their redemption.

Persecution had broken forth again, this time under the favor of Herod. He had imprisoned and later put to death one of my old neighbors in Capernaum, James, who, with John and Andrew and me, had given up nets and boats at Jesus' invitation to follow Him. Then, finding that this execution had pleased the Jews, Herod apprehended me and cast me into prison, planning to slay me after the Feast of the Passover, which was not far off. I did not know of his plans, but I felt sure that my fate would be the same as that of my beloved friend. The Church was better informed of the situation than I was, and had gathered in the home of Mary, the mother of Mark, and was there engaged in prayer for my deliverance. Such deliverance seemed impossible; but in the night, as I was sleeping, chained to soldiers on either side, I was roused from sleep by a light in the cell. I felt sure that the time of my departure was at hand; but I heard a voice bidding me rise and follow the speaker. I found myself free from chains. I saw that the guards still slept, and I was amazed to see the different doors swing open, and to know that I was passing unchallenged by the soldiers on guard. Soon the outer gate of the prison opened, and I found myself in the street of the city.

I had thought, up to this time, that I had been dreaming; but I knew now that I had been miracu-

lously delivered from danger. Hurriedly making my way to the home of Mary, I had difficulty in persuading them that their prayers had been answered and that I was really free. Great was their and my own joy at God's great mercy toward me. Great was the surprize of our enemies when they found the doors of the prison fast shut, the guards in place—and the prisoner gone. Herod was much displeased and ordered the keepers of the prison to be put to death.

These persecutions did not hinder the spread of the Gospel. They may have retarded it a little, but the growth of the Church was really marvelous.

I will have to admit that even Pentecost and visions did not entirely wipe out my old prejudice against the Gentiles' receiving an equal share in the blessings of God in Christ. I found myself embarrassed when I spoke to others than the children of Abraham. I am ashamed to confess to this narrowness of spirit. Paul and I had some bitter words about it, and Paul was right and I was wrong; but we finally decided that I should work among those of the House of Israel, and that he should go as the special ambassador of Christ and the Church to the Gentile peoples.

This arrangement proved very satisfactory to both of us, and very profitable to the Church. Under it, he and I labored in the way best suited to our individual natures, and the Lord greatly blessed us both. The blessing extended also to the people to whom we carried the message of Bethlehem and Calvary and the empty tomb and the Mount of Olives and Pentecost —which is after all but one message—the message of God's passionate love for man, expressed in the pro-

vision for his salvation through the vicarious sacrifice of His only begotten Son, Jesus of Nazareth.

Fishing in the Sea of Galilee was both enjoyable and profitable, and we were regarded as little better than fools to leave all this that we might follow a stranger who made to us a rather indefinite promise; but, as I look back over the years spent with Him in learning how to catch men, and as I recall the years during which I repeatedly cast the net and drew it to shore, full to the breaking point—full of men redeemed—I can not but thank God for that day when Jesus stood beside the sea and invited me to follow Him, and for the day when I dropped the nets and climbed out of the boat and bade my neighbors and friends good-by, and followed Him. Greater joy I could never have known than that which was mine in these blessed, happy years of fellowship and service for men and the Church and the Kingdom and the Christ.

VIII

MATTHEW, THE DISCIPLE WHOM MEN HATED

"And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican, Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, 'Follow me.'

"And he left all, rose up, and followed Him.

"And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house; and there was a great company of publicans, and of others that sat down with them.

"But the scribes and Pharisees murmured against His disciples, saying, 'Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?'

"And Jesus, answering, said unto them, 'They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'"

VIII

MATTHEW, THE DISCIPLE WHOM MEN HATED

FOR almost two centuries Rome and my nation had been engaged in armed conflicts. Sometimes Rome would be victorious, sometimes we would find ourselves strong enough to break her hated yoke, and become a free people; but since the defeat by Pompey, about 65 years before my birth, my country had been a province of the great empire, ruled by her appointees, but allowed a large measure of autonomy.

Rome, however, made compulsory the circulation of her currency, and the payment to her of tribute. This was galling to every true Israelite, and the tax was never paid without strong protest.

Her system of gathering in her taxes was very simple and easy for the government. She estimated her expense for a certain period of time, let the total be known, and immediately her wealthy citizens furnished the needed sum. That was the extent of Rome's concern—that she had in hand the money. But these men must be reimbursed, and a profit added. They, in turn, subdivided all Roman territory, and the provinces, and sold the taxing privileges to men living in each subdivision, who would bid highest for the privilege of levying upon these smaller portions for their advances and compensation. So it continued down to the smallest precincts in all lands, such as Jericho and Capernaum

in my own country. It was in these smallest sections, and in the final levies, that the greatest opportunity for oppressive taxation lay, and Rome enacted such laws to aid in the collection of these revenues that there was no limit upon the amounts, no appeal from unjust or exorbitant assessments, and no relief from drastic penalties imposed for refusal to pay.

You can realize readily that, if the mere fact of paying taxes to a foreign power was distasteful to my people, an increasing hatred for every one who added to the burden that galled was a very natural consequence—particularly for the one who added the last, and usually the largest, increase; the one to whom the whole sum was paid was the one for whom, naturally, the most intense hatred was felt. The man farther up could conceal his identity and escape all but the subsurface antipathy; but the man who sat at the seat of custom and actually received the money, was the man whom Israel could see and know, the one with whom the people would come into direct contact, the one for whom, by look and word, they could show their insolent contempt and bitter scorn. Of course, this attitude made their situation more and more unhappy, for the tax-gatherer could add, and add, and add, and smile while adding, and thus obtain his revenge for their curses. These collectors were called publicans. Many of them were Romans, but some of them were Israel's own sons. It requires no great skill in reasoning to arrive at the conclusion that, if such contempt was felt for an alien who imposed his autocratic will upon a helpless victim, a thousand times more intense would that hatred be for one's own countrymen, who for the

hope of easy, certain, and large gain, would occupy such a position.

I well knew all this. I had heard Rome and her servile minions cursed with the most terrible curses from my earliest childhood. My father and mother, in their prayers to Jehovah, pleaded that He would smite with His most terrible plagues the Israelite apostate, and the Roman who could smile as he robbed in the name of the Government and law.

As the day for payment approached, my people never knew whether the tax would be the same as in the year before, or whether it would be doubled; but I have seen my mother and my father weep for days as they realized the depth of poverty that must be endured all the rest of the year in order to meet, not Rome's, but the publican's demands, which included his own and every other overlord's principal and profit, and Rome's really small portion. I suffered much myself for the comforts of home life, which were impossible because of these unrighteous demands.

I well remember the day when, for the first time, we saw in Capernaum one of our own race sitting at the collector's table. The presence of a stranger, whose power to punish we feared, might hold in check all audible cursing, but the presence of one of our own townsmen, acting as a servant of Rome and an oppressor of Israel, released all the pent-up rebellion, and protest, and passion of a century of such oppression, and from every one's lips there poured forth a torrent of every conceivable form of malediction. The children even were infected with the spirit of their parents, and from safe distances they hurled stones and sticks, and

lifted their shrill voices in childish curses. It was a terrible experience, but when the storm quieted down a little, and envious countrymen saw the splendid homes, the rich garments, the servants in the house, the luxurious food upon the table, and the ease and freedom from care of the publican, one after the other of them yielded to the lure, and displaced the alien at the revenue desk.

But do not think that the cost of such an act ever decreased. The outcry did, the tumult of protest died down, but the real cost never became less. The Israelite collector became an outcast from the synagogs; he was ostracized socially; he was not even recognized as a member of the commonwealth. No one spoke to him. No one showed him any courtesy or compassion or sympathy. His position was the most despised and dangerous that any one could accept.

I am telling you all of this because I am in a position to know, and to speak with authority; for—I became a publican. You will wonder why, and I am not surprized that you marvel, after I have told you of my own and my family's bitter experience. I am sure that you must regard me as one gone mad. But I was not mad; rather, after deliberate and careful weighing of cost and profit in the balances, I became the successful bidder for the province of Galilee, with headquarters in Capernaum, my own city. You are interested to know why, and I will tell you.

In the first place, I was studiously inclined. I loved to read and then ponder the writings of our lawgivers and prophets of old time. As I thought on these, there came to me clearly an understanding of God's purposes

and plans for us, His chosen people; I understood that He asked that we "do justly," and "love mercy," and "walk humbly with our God." I learned that He placed obedience to His law above both sacrifice and offering; that love for Him was valued far more highly by Him than the laborious compliance with a ritual or a wearying conformity to a rigid and inflexible law. But when I contrasted this that seemed to me to be a God-given interpretation with the empty and profitless religion of my fathers as it was proclaimed by Rabbi, Scribe or Pharisee; as I saw the craftiness of the priestly class from High Priest to the Levite helper; as I listened to their labored interpretations of the will of Jehovah, which seemed so simple and so beautiful to me; as I saw these leaders add to the moral and spiritual requirements as heavily and as heartlessly as the publicans added to the taxes; as I detected their sham and pretense and hypocrisy, my soul revolted against it all, and I determined to get the most and the best out of life that I could obtain at the lowest cost and in the easiest way; so I deliberately, and with my eyes wide open, renounced everything that I had before considered worth while—my pride of race, my national loyalty, and my privileges of the synagog and the Temple—and became an outcast.

The second reason was the gain that would be mine. No more exhausting toil would distress me. No crushing burden of taxation would ever bear me down. No possibility of loss would ever have to be faced. Rome would not let me lose. There would be no going out after my money. No excuses would have to be heard. They would bring Rome's money to me. I could sit

in the cool shade in a comfortable chair, and they, my countrymen, would bring me this gold and silver, and when my easy hours of labor were over, I could go to my home, to every comfort and to the most delicious and costly food and drink. And, too, I had much time for uninterrupted study and contemplation. No, no one ever disturbed me.

I took it, too, as a means of protection for my countrymen. I would be satisfied, and was satisfied, with a moderate measure of profit, whereas an alien might make extravagant demands from which there would be no possibility of escape.

I said a moment ago that my home was in Capernaum. I had in time grown accustomed to the insulting looks and words, and even the wicked imprecations of those who hated me, yet feared me. I was also improving my financial condition in a satisfactory manner.

But one day there came to Capernaum one, Jesus of Nazareth, who, unlike the scribes and Pharisees, the rabbis and the priests, talked anywhere that opportunity offered—in synagogs, in private homes, and out in the open air. He also spoke to any one who wished to converse with Him. I could not go into the synagog. I had forfeited that right by becoming a publican. No door of any home would open to admit me, so I could not approach Him or hear Him except when He spoke in the open. But He seemed to prefer this, for, most often, I would see Him down by the seaside, sitting sometimes in a boat and speaking to the people, sitting or standing on the shore, or in the shade of the trees with the crowds packed close about Him. I felt that the open spaces were as much mine as anyone's

else, so I very often approached and listened. And from the very first, I felt a keen interest and a resulting satisfaction in His words. He spoke simply but strongly; respectfully of the Law and the Prophets, but with authority. There was something so strikingly different that I was greatly impressed, and I determined to hear Him at every opportunity. And I had many opportunities; for He made Capernaum His headquarters, being a guest of Simon, the fisherman.

I was greatly pleased with the freshness, the newness and the beauty of His parables, and of His more direct teaching. The more I pondered what He said, the more thoroughly I was convinced that the God of my forefathers, the God that my own soul had found, was speaking through Him to Israel. I still stood apart from the crowd, but I was certain that He saw me, and I was sure also that He knew why I stood apart and alone; for He had often passed close to where I sat receiving Rome's revenue. I felt very much gratified when one day He denounced the practises of the scribes and the Pharisees. I too had condemned them in my own heart. I was glad for His confirmation of my own opinion of them.

But one day, as I stood there listening, He spoke words which brought the blood surging to my temples. He was speaking of what the Law of Moses had said, and, in contrast, was giving His own commands. He said:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'Love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy;' but I say unto you, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute

you; . . . for if ye love them which love you, why do you feel that you should be commended? This is something that the publicans do. . . . Or, if ye salute your brethren only, why do you consider yourselves better than others? Even the publicans do this."

I saw that even He made a distinction and stressed the thought that better things should be forthcoming from those to whom He spoke than from the publicans. And then He added: "Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." These words started me to thinking seriously. Other words that had been spoken by Him had made me restless. Such words as these: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also;" and, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and Mammon."

While we publicans from among the chosen race were prosperous, we were not really happy. Jesus never revealed more accurately the true condition of the publican's heart than in the parable in which the tax-gatherer is pictured as crying out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

I had my own beautiful home in Capernaum. I was rated as rich, tho I was not as rich as I was reputed to be. But these words of Jesus would not let me rest. They gripped me, lashed me, tortured me. I tried to

still my conscience, but I could not. I decided to hear Him no more, but I could not remain away when I knew that He was speaking. The sense of my sinfulness was very real, so, when Jesus came to my side one day while I was at work, and said in that quiet, persuading voice that had thrilled me so often, "Follow me," I did not think of the consequences to Him or to me. I was so overjoyed that He had spoken to me in words that carried another message than curses and contempt, that I immediately joined Him, leaving my accounts to any one whom Rome might secure to succeed me.

Consequences did follow—followed quickly. I was so happy over the thought that Jesus had a place for such as I had been until now, that I wanted others to know it too; so I prepared a great feast, to which I invited my publican friends and Jesus and His disciples.

Invitations to my feasts were not usually declined for ordinary reasons. Rarely did any one fail to come, if it were possible for him to attend. Such a feast had been made ready with Jesus as chief guest.

I knew that He would come, but I was not so sure of the disciples, whom I knew so well, and who had denounced me most bitterly as a publican; for a goodly part of my income came from the tax upon the fishing industry, in which most of them had been engaged. But they came, altho I am quite sure that they were not greatly elated when they found themselves in such company. Others, who would not think of accepting my invitations, made the disciples more uncomfortable by asking them in public why their Master and they were eating with publicans and sinners. I expected serious

trouble from such hot-headed men as John and James. I expected to hear stinging words from the ready-tongued Simon. I felt sure that Nathanael would avoid me because of my apostasy; but I was greatly and happily disappointed, for little was ever said of my past life or of my hated occupation.

Jesus heard the criticism of the crowd that stood about watching and listening, as the feast progressed, and rebuked them, at the same time greatly comforting me, as He said: "They that be whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick do have such need; go ye and learn what that meaneth—'I will have mercy and not sacrifice, for I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'"

Yes, consequences followed. For after I joined the company Jesus was never again invited to speak in the synagog at Capernaum, and the bitter hostility of the Galileans toward Him dated from that time.

I expected serious trouble from the multitudes when I first appeared publicly in company with Him and the others; but in this, too, I was happily disappointed.

I said very little, and rarely if ever put myself forward in any way; but my every interest was centered each day upon the wonderful words which were spoken by Jesus. They never lost their charm for me.

I was so occupied with observing His method of instruction, and in listening to His novel interpretations of the Scriptures, that I paid little attention to anything else.

His miracle-working was of thrilling interest, and, judging only by the numbers always about us and their comments in His favor, I was sure that the prophetic

words of John the Baptist concerning Him as King, and of the Kingdom, were beyond all question true. The longer I remained with Him, the more assured I became.

Three happy years went by swiftly, and the time of the great Feast of the Passover drew near. This was always a time of religious and patriotic fervor. Our country was stirred to her outmost bounds as at no other time of the year.

In preceding years we had attended, and once more we turned our faces toward the Holy City, and toward the Temple of our God.

It was a natural consequence of a national feast and pilgrimage that the highways, as we drew nearer to Jerusalem, should become more and more crowded because of the constant additions from the side roads and footpaths, every one of which poured its quota into the main highways.

As the numbers increased, the enthusiasm grew, and when we had gone as far as Jericho, the roads were jammed. For miles this narrow ribbon of humanity stretched, and it formed a most charming picture to one who could look down upon it. The brilliantly colored garments were strikingly blended, giving the appearance of a vast moving garden of flowers in which blossoms of every conceivable hue had found a place not by accident but according to the design of a master artist.

We had started earlier than usual, and had reached Bethany about seven days before the feast. We were welcomed as guests in the home of Mary and Martha and Lazarus.

On the way, every one was deeply interested in Jesus. News of His many miracles had preceded us. Lazarus, who had so recently been raised from the dead by Jesus, mingled freely with the crowds. Reports of Jesus' wonderful words had gone everywhere, and the feeling was almost universal that the time had come for Him to proclaim Himself King, and to establish His Kingdom in Jerusalem. Surely this great feast, commemorating, as it did, one great deliverance, would furnish a wonderfully fitting background for a final emancipation—for a glorious independence that would never end. I felt it as did every one else with whom I talked. A suppressed excitement, a thrill of expectancy, hard to explain in any other way, was evident everywhere.

The Sabbath day dawned. I can never forget it. We left Bethany for Jerusalem early, but accompanied by quite a large company of people, and had gone as far as Bethphage, when Jesus sent two of us into the village with instructions to bring to Him a beast which would be found tied there. We all wondered what use He would make of it. We waited until they returned, and then we seemed—all of us at the same instant—to apprehend His purpose. We seemed, all of us, to hear the voice of the prophet of God of old crying with all the old-time fervor, "Rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for, behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, the foal of an ass!"

This was the long-expected day! The day of His crowning! We stripped off our outer garments and threw them upon the back of the beast. Lifting Jesus, we set Him thereon, and then seizing palm-branches

from the near-by trees, we waved them, at the same time crying lustily, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Instantly the suppressed excitement broke all bounds, and from every side men came running. They, too, seized palm-branches, and adding their voices to ours, joined us in our march to Jerusalem, where the throne awaited its God-appointed occupant. Our cries were soon heard in the city, already crowded with guests, and out through her gates poured streams of men who came to meet us and to join us in our wildly enthusiastic exaltation of Jesus. Oh, it was truly a wonderful dawning of a truly wonderful day in Israel's history! We had hoped long for it. The conviction had been growing upon us that it must soon come—this deliverance from Rome—must come in our day and generation. No one could look upon this scene, and hear this outburst of recognition and welcome, and doubt that the God of Abraham had, in Jesus, redeemed another of His gracious promises to His chosen people.

Jerusalem was already decorated for the feast. Never had she seemed more truly regal and ready for the coming of her King than on this most beautiful day. Her gates were open wide to welcome Him, and through them we swept, a gloriously happy throng. Through her narrow but passionately loved streets, we pressed, still crying, "Rejoice, O Daughter of Zion; for thy King cometh unto thee!" alternating, as in some great antiphonal hymn, with "Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Not to the royal palace, but straight to the House of Israel's God, the Temple, He led us, and, there, dismounting, He exercised His kingly authority in purging it of those who, with priestly sanction, had defiled it.

All day long He held the people by His power. From every one's lips there came words that acclaimed Him King.

At last the day ended! The Roman fortress had not fallen, but still cast its dark shadow over the Temple area! The legions of Rome still frowned upon us! Her cursed yoke still rested upon us!

No crown had been placed by prophet or by priest upon His head. No call to arms had been sounded by Him. No throne had been ascended. No scepter had been placed in His hands. Why this anticlimax?

No one understood it, but we were all sure that some reason would be given us later and that He would justify this postponement. Jesus had simply deferred the hour of announcing His purpose and assuming control. We must abide His time. Surely the feast period would not pass without the breaking of Rome's power, and the humbling of her haughty, arrogant spirit!

We little dreamed that instead of an everlasting throne there would be raised a cross, and that instead of crowning Him King, Israel would crucify. Yet in so short a time, He who had been received with such sincere acclaim had been rejected with disdain. In those few hours triumph had given place to terror and the tomb, and our eyes had looked upon Him whom they had pierced.

I can not depict the depth of our dejection and

despair. Let others do so who can, but a darkness that could be felt enfolded us and held us fast.

Yet in the midst of it all, I found time to think back to that day in Capernaum, when He had stood beside me, an apostate Jew, condemned, cursed by my countrymen, and had invited me, a hated publican, to become a follower. I thought again of all that my acceptance of His invitation had meant to me, the reawakening of my religious consciousness, the reviving of my one-time happy relationship with God, the rekindling of my faith, the stimulation of a love for men, for my country, and for my God, and the bringing in of a better and a brighter day, with a hope that would never die. And, while the cross loomed large, and the grave looked very deep, and dark, and forbidding; while sorrow reigned supreme, and disappointment was more than crushing, there came to me an appreciation of the truly regal character of Him whom I had welcomed to my heart as the one and only King before whom I would ever bow down; the only one whom I would happily obey. There came to me, too, a feeling of deep gratitude for a love so divinely strong and a heart so divinely tender and great, as to include even a hated, despised publican.

We were a mixed company, this group in the upper room in Jerusalem; rich, poor, fishermen, students, merchants, publicans, redeemed harlots. His grace had been sufficient to receive us all, and His power was great enough then, as it is great enough now, to remold, remake, reform, recreate, and, thank God, redeem all of us, and all others, whosoever they may be, who call upon Him for salvation.

To-day, the Church, into which we were the first to enter—the Church grown beautiful, and strong, and glorious—the Church which has encompassed the globe with her blessed Gospel of a crucified and risen Saviour—the Church, built upon that foundation which nothing can ever even threaten—this Church recalls that triumph of Jesus, rejoices in it, short-lived tho it seemed to be. It is fitting that she should.

But let me urge those hearts whose thresholds have not yet been crossed by the victorious Christ, to add to the glory of His most precious name by throwing the doors wide open to receive Him, and by welcoming Him to His rightful place as Lord of Lords and King of Kings, as Saviour and Redeemer from sin. May the great God and the ever-living Christ once again honor my witness for Him as He honored it many times in my days upon the earth, through the surrender of souls to Him, and the giving, by Him, unto them, of everlasting life!

IX

THE DEMONIZED AT GADARA—SIN-BOUND, BUT FREED BY CHRIST

"And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when He went forth to land, there met Him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, 'What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most High? I beseech thee, torment me not.' And Jesus asked him saying, 'What is thy name?' And he said 'Legion,' because many devils were entered into him.

"And they (the demons) besought Him that He would not command them to go out into the deep. And there was an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought Him that He would suffer them to enter into them; and He suffered them.

"Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

"When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled and went and told it in the city and in the country.

"Then they went out to see what was done, and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid."

IX

THE DEMONIZED AT GADARA—SIN-BOUND, BUT FREED BY CHRIST

MY parents, who had lived not far from Capernaum, on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee, and who were both well-to-do and worshipers of Jehovah, Israel's God, died when I was a mere child, and my recollection of them is very faint. But I do recall that, like all other children, I was very early taught about Jehovah, and His choice of us as the recipients of His peculiar blessing, and His wonderful dealings with us.

No one seemed to care particularly for me. I was at last taken into the home of my father's brother, a man none too kind naturally, and as he had children of his own, I at once became to him an added burden and an unwelcome encumbrance. Young as I was, he assigned to me tasks too heavy for me to undertake or accomplish in the allotted time, and when I failed, he would punish me cruelly.

His wife, too, showed her feeling to be the same as that of my uncle; for she begrudged me food and clothing sufficient for my needs. Many times I was sent to bed so hungry that I would cry myself to sleep, or, finding sleep impossible, I would slip out of my bed in the night and steal food enough to satisfy my hunger so that sleep would come.

These raids upon the family stores were always discovered, and for them I was beaten cruelly. Not only for wrongs that I did do, but for many that I did not do, I suffered severely.

The children of the home looked upon me as an intruder, and teased and nagged and tormented me, so that I fought them fiercely and frequently.

Scolded, punished, starved, tormented, I at last ran away, but no one followed to bring me back. I slept where I could; stole food and clothing when I needed it, and soon gained a name which was anything but what it should have been.

I hungered for the companionship of children, but when I would approach a group of them at play, their mothers would rush from their homes and drive me away, or would call their children in, warning them against having anything to do with a boy who was certain to come to some bad end.

In this atmosphere I lived through my boyhood, and with increasing physical strength, my hatred of men increased—of men, at least, who professed such piety and godliness as my uncle professed, but who could treat so cruelly a homeless child. I hated a religion that produced such heartless people. My parents had told me of Jehovah, who had chosen Israel to be the object of His peculiar favor, and had impressed upon me the richness of His blessings; but I felt that He, too, had excluded me from the number of the blessed; for He had taken from me my parents and my home, and had turned every man's hand and every man's heart against me. I found myself hating this God of Israel.

When I had reached young manhood, I began to

roam from place to place, obtaining employment where I could. It was in this roaming, unsettled life that I discovered that all men were not alike. I discovered that there were, in every town, some who would give me a kindly word and a hearty welcome. I learned too that all Israelites were not godly men, and that all of Israel's womanhood was not as pure and good as my mother.

In every market-place the unemployed would gather in the early morning in the hope of finding chance employment. Most of those who gathered here were men like myself, homeless and friendless, accepting work in the busy season of harvesting grain and grapes, and drifting back again into the market-place when the lean days came.

I discovered that stagnant men were like stagnant water. The scum comes to the surface and remains on top, time only serving to thicken the scum and to make all the more impure the water underneath. Men of this type were found by me in every village. These were they who welcomed me always. They were ever glad to make new acquaintances.

While I had stolen food and clothing from dire necessity, and had fought fiercely when attacked, I had not been guilty of the grosser sins against the Law. Nothing seemed to give these idlers more real joy than to find one, especially a youth, a stranger to the sodden paths of sin. Nothing so thrilled them as to throw open before the startled eyes of a clean-minded youth, all the doors of the gilded palaces of evil, all the alluring vices, all the unsuspected fields of sinful pleasure. To see his eyes open wide, as for the first time he beheld;

to see his face flush hot under the scorching breath of a newly discovered passion; to hear his breath come and go in gasps as undreamed-of depths of evil were opened suddenly at his very feet—all this was like new wine in their veins, and upon these occasional or rare experiences they would dwell with the greatest pleasure. And rarely would they count their task complete, or well done, until they had seen the neophyte well started on his way. Not infrequently would they go with him a full day's journey on the evil road.

Such as these, with their companions in evil, base as or baser than they who trafficked in virtue, greeted me everywhere I went. Their friendship, their praise, their sympathy for one who had been so ill-treated as I had been, first appealed to me, then won me to them, and to their life. Starved for friendship, I ate and ate and ate of their foul bread. Thirsting for sympathy, I drank and drank and drank of their polluted wines. Hated as I had been, I loved those who loved me, and resolutely I turned my back upon what I had regarded as good, and fixed my eyes and my heart upon that which was only and altogether evil.

It is a long, long story to tell, and I do not want you to hear from my own lips the story of my swift descent to utter degradation; a descent which any one can make, if he sets his heart upon evil and not upon God. It is a long story to tell, but the end is neither uncertain nor far removed from the starting-point when one's heart is fixed on sin.

I drank to its dregs sin's deep cup, and filled it again and again, and held it to my lips, and drained it to its last bitter drop. The end, so close to the first step in

the evil way, was reached by me. The pace had been too swift to be long maintained. The tension had been too high; something had to yield, and something did yield. I noticed, now, that when I entered the market-place, other loiterers quickly withdrew. I found that once more when I passed through the streets of the villages, frightened mothers called their children into their homes, barred the doors, and with startled eyes peeped through curtained windows until I had passed by.

No good can be accomplished by rehearsing the sordid details of my sad experience, but one day I was apprehended and brought before the elders of the city. The priest was there, and when the session was over, I was warned to return no more to the city or the haunts of men, under penalty of chains and imprisonment.

I was not mad. No, I understood all they had said to me. They told me that I had so given myself up to evil-doing that I had become possessed with devils, and that I must go from the fellowship of men.

I journeyed eastward from Capernaum, crossed the river Jordan, and held to the shore of the Sea of Galilee in a southeasterly direction until I came to the region of Gadara, a wild, mountainous section, rarely visited by men. Caves were here in plenty, which were used as dens by wild beasts, or for burying-places by the very poor of the people. The sea was not far away. This would furnish me with water, and villages were not so far removed as to make food hard to obtain. Here I determined to stay. Here men occasionally came, but not often; for my old hatred of them had re-

turned in intensified form. Once or twice I had been overpowered by men, and chains and fetters had been riveted upon me, in an effort to control me; but to snap these chains and break these fetters was child's play when I became furious. At last reason fled. I would injure myself dreadfully without feeling pain, and when lucid moments came, as they sometimes did, I could not remember when or how these wounds had been received.

One day I stood on the hilltop overlooking the sea. It was a day when the sea was most beautifully calm. The sun shone bright, and the surface of the water was like a mirror. Far out on the sea, near the western shore, I saw a boat moving gracefully under the strong, easy pull of the men sitting at the oars. The beauty of the scene did not fit my mood, and I turned angrily away.

Suddenly it grew dark about me. I looked again seaward, and saw that the waves were tossing madly under the force of one of the storms for which this sea was noted. The boat, I saw, was having a hard time to ride out the storm, and I hoped that it would sink from sight with all on board. This was more to my liking—this raging fury. I laughed into the face of the oncoming storm. Sure of the fate of those caught out upon the sea, I returned to my cave. But the storm soon passed, as these storms usually did, and I went to the brow of the hill to see what had become of the boat and the men. It had weathered the storm and was drawn up on the beach just below me, and the men were leaping from it to the shore. Some were already part-way up the hillside.

I knew from past experiences what such groups meant to me—chains, fetters, bonds. I ran back to my cave and hid, and when I looked again the entire company had reached the top of the hill.

I determined to fight for my freedom, so raging, I rushed towards them, a hurricane of wrath and hatred; but in some way I recognized a difference from other men. Something within me warned me not to harm them. Suddenly I was calling out words that I knew were not mine. "Jesus," I cried, "Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God, what have I to do with Thee? Let us alone. Let us alone. Art Thou come hither to destroy us before the time?" Now I was groveling on the ground at His feet, crying, "Let us alone! Let us alone!" But in a moment I heard Him say, "Go! Go!"

Something had happened to me. I can not describe it. I felt very weak, not at all as I had a moment before. I sat up. One of the men took off his outer coat and threw it over my shoulders, for I was naked. I made no protest against this, the first act of kindness that I had known in years. I felt no hatred for these men. I knew no desire to harm them; instead, a desire to be with them.

On the hilltop, the grass grew in abundance. Water was close at hand. The rocks offered shade from the heat of the sun, and some Gentiles and renegade Jews pastured here a herd of swine. These swine suddenly became restless, uneasy, unmanageable, and ran down the steep hillside and were drowned in the sea. Their keepers had watched the approach of the group of men, and had drawn much nearer than was their wont, expecting, no doubt, to witness another attempt to

bind me. These had seen what had occurred, and, after losing control of the herd, had fled and told the owners, with the result that soon a great crowd had gathered. In the meantime I realized what had happened to me. That awful power which had controlled me, which had dominated me, had been broken. My reason had returned to its throne, and I had not moved from the feet of Him who had given me this freedom. The crowd drew near. They had been afraid of me, but now they seemed to fear Him more, and with one accord they besought Him to go from their shore.

Without a word of protest to them, He, with those who had come with Him, began to move toward the boat, still drawn up upon the sand. I saw that He intended to go, and I followed to the water's edge. They entered the boat and seated themselves at the oars. All was changed now, both with and in me. I could see nothing in this bleak hillside, in these lonely caves, to attract or hold me. The whole region made me shudder with dread. This little boat contained all that I valued in the world, my benefactor and the only ones who had ever been really kind to me. I could not stay here alone, and, besides, I wanted to be with the One who had done so much for me; so I attempted to step into the boat, but it was already full. I pleaded for a place, offering to take my turn at the oars; but again the One who had spoken on the hilltop that one word, "Go," which meant healing to me and help for me, uttered it again, saying to me, "Go to thy family and friends and neighbors, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee"; and then the oars dipped again into the waters of the sea, and under the

steady pull of the rowers the boat moved out from the shore.

I stood and watched it as it rode the sea, now quiet and peaceful and beautiful again, as it lay still in the light of the setting sun. Even after the boat was lost in the distance, I did not move from where I stood. It seemed that from out yonder in the distance, that blessed voice kept coming to me over and over again, saying to me, "You will serve me best by telling in your own neighborhood, and to your own friends what great things God hath done for you."

I was no longer afraid. My sole desire now was to do what good I could. The transformation had been sudden, but complete. I left this blessed spot and made my way, ere the night should fall, into the nearest village. It was not yet dark. Groups of men were still standing in the streets. I was well known here, where I had been nicknamed "Legion," for this was the only name I ever gave. They at first fled from me; but when they saw that I was no longer the evil fury that I had been, they came to me, slowly at first, but soon eagerly, and I, in response to their inquiry, told what had been done for me, and how, and by whom.

As days passed and they saw that the cure was not a mere respite, but permanent, they rejoiced greatly with me, and expressed regret, again and again, for their treatment of my benefactor.

Jesus had not promised me that He would ever return to Gadara, from which place He had been driven, but ever and always I seemed to hear His voice saying to me "Go tell what great things God hath done for thee."

I had become notorious throughout the whole region, first on account of my shameless, sinful life, and then for the ferocity of my life under demoniacal control. The news of my freedom from this mastery ran on before me now, and, wherever I went, crowds met me, welcomed me, invited me to their homes, and urged me over and over to tell them the story, snatches of which they had already heard. I never tired of telling it. I was only cancelling, in part, a debt that could never be paid in full. Everywhere I went, after hearing my story, a strong wish was expressed that Jesus might return to Gadara.

Most of the villages here, as on the west side of the sea, were close to the water's edge. I did not go far inland, for I could reach more people by remaining close to the sea.

No one questioned the greatness of the miracle. They could not doubt its genuineness. They needed but to remember me as I was, and regard me as I stood before them.

Many of the villages in the old day had forbidden me to enter. From many I had been driven by mobs armed with clubs and stones. In more than one I had been bound with fetters and chains. But I felt no desire now for revenge, and never once did I have the desire to lift to my lips again and drain the deep and bitter cup of sin.

Weeks after the boat put out from the shore with Jesus and the twelve in it, I stood again by the sea, thinking of what had gone by, when I looked toward Capernaum and saw a boat approaching. It looked strangely familiar to me, and as it approached the

shore, I saw that in it sat Jesus and the twelve. Great was my joy when they stepped upon the shore and greeted me as one of their own company. Specially dear to me were the words of Jesus, as He said to me, "Thy work has been well done." I did not know for the moment what He meant, until I looked where He was looking—shoreward—then I understood. Others had seen His approach. The crowd was coming swiftly, and almost every group of three or four carried a burden. In chairs, or on pallets, they were carrying the sick and other needy ones. The blind were being led. Lepers were approaching, their pitiful cries, "Unclean, unclean!" being distinctly heard. Demonized men, chained or otherwise held in restraint, were being brought to Him. Now the people were not asking Him to depart from their coasts, but to stay and help and heal others, as He had healed me.

And He healed them every one of whatsoever disease each had—healed them completely.

It was a glorious day, and by far the happiest that I had ever known. That other day, some three months removed, was a happy day for me, but it was not the happiest day. This was so because, on that other day I alone had been healed, and I alone had believed, while Jesus was urged to go away. Now multitudes were being healed at His hand, and believed, and Jesus was the welcome guest of all.

My part was small. I had done only what He had asked me to do—tell what great thing God had done for me; but with His blessing upon my story, which had been believed, great results, which He had foreseen, had come.

I will quickly close. But let me urge upon you who have heard my story to profit by it. Let no one of you ever blight or blacken the life of any child by giving to the child himself, and to others, the impression that he is bad, sinful, wicked. My own bitter experience began in just that way.

There is nothing so deadly or cruel in its mastery of the human heart as sin. Sin is no myth. Let no one deceive himself by thinking that it is, or that there is no Prince of Darkness, who has power to obtain control of any unprotected life. I know him and his power. Let no one persuade you that there is help, outside of Jesus Christ, that can break that control and free you from that power. But He can do it. I know His power. There is no surer way to remain free from the mastery of sin than to give full possession and control of your life to Jesus Christ. I know His blessed, kindly control. There is no greater joy that human hearts can know than to be the agent, under God, in opening the prison doors to those who are bound, and in winning men to Him. There is no greater privilege than helpful service. There is no clearer expression of gratitude to Christ for what He has done for you, than witness-bearing—telling what great things God has done for you.

X

THOMAS, THE DISCIPLE WHO HONESTLY DOUBTED

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you.'

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

"The other disciples therefore said unto him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said unto them, 'Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my fingers into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.'

"And after eight days, again the disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, 'Peace be unto you.'

"Then saith He unto Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.'

"And Thomas answered and said unto Him, 'My Lord and my God.'"

X

THOMAS, THE DISCIPLE WHO HONESTLY DOUBTED

I WAS born in Antioch of Israelitish parents, who had gone far to the north of the land of our heritage because of commercial advantages offered by so large a city, drawing its trade from the inland and also from the sea. The only other child in the family was my sister, Lysia, born at the same time as I, and —possibly to distinguish me from others in the same neighborhood bearing the name Thomas—this fact was over-emphasized, it seemed to me, for I was always spoken of as "Thomas, the Twin" (Didymus). I often heard from my mother's lips the story of twin brothers, Jacob and Esau, born to Isaac and Rebecca, and by these stories I was impressed deeply with the difference in nature that can exist in two so closely associated before birth.

My mother told me that Jacob appealed to, and was a favorite of his mother, while Esau was a favorite with his father; and that time did not remove this difference in feeling. I do not know that a difference in disposition is always present in twins, but I do know that my sister and I were very unlike.

We, as a race, were strong believers in prenatal influence. Whether right or wrong in this, if there were any sunshine in my mother's nature or life, my sister Lysia received it. If there were clouds or shadows

in her life, I inherited them. This was manifested very early in my life. I can remember, when we were old enough to roam in the open fields near our home, in fields bright and beautiful with the Roses of Sharon and other many-colored flowers, she would cry out in her delight; her eyes would glow; her cheeks would flush with pleasure, and, darting from bush to bush or plant to plant, she would gather her arms full of fragrant blossoms, and, carrying them to our home, would so vividly describe the fields as we found them and as she saw them, that the picture was at once appreciated and enjoyed by all those who heard her enthusiastic story. Her happiness was contagious, and soon all were as happy as she. I, too, saw the blossoms, and, under her leadership and inspiration, gathered my arms full and carried them to our home; but to me they were just so many red, blue, yellow and white flowers.

She saw beauty everywhere, in everything about her, in rocks, and hills and streams. I saw only size and ruggedness, and height and depth.

It was the same with the synagog teachings. Her ears were quick to catch the meaning of the words, and her heart as ready to receive whatever the Rabbi or the leader of the day taught to be the will of Jehovah as the truth; and again her face would glow as it did when she rejoiced in the beauty or the fragrance of the flowers. I heard as clearly as she did all that was spoken; but before I could accept for truth what had been said, I was compelled to consider it carefully, look at it from all sides, propose and dispose of every possible objection. When it had stood

my test, however, it became, for me, a part of the truth. After accepting it, I treasured it highly and never let it slip from me.

It was so with our friends. Her heart was big enough to give a place to all who sought her friendship. Some, naturally, proved to be unworthy of it; but she had no suspicions, no prejudices; asked no questions. I made my friends more slowly, but when I admitted them to my smaller circle I gave them my all—all the love that I had—and was loyal to them, no matter what might occur to shake my confidence in them.

When I reached maturity, I was greatly attracted by the sea and the ships that brought produce and news from the outside world. I used to go out frequently with the fishermen of the neighborhood, and was very happy when we would bring to land our boat loaded to the water's edge with the catch of fish. More and more I was drawn to this occupation by its profits and by its real pleasures.

I had never been permitted to forget that I was a child of Abraham; that I had a heritage in the land to the south of us, a land which I had seldom seen, but a land of which I had heard much. I longed to see it more. I became dissatisfied with Antioch, and I begged my parents to return to the land of their nativity, promising them that I would help, in every way I could, to support them, making up to them whatever of loss they might sustain until they could establish a business in Canaan.

Fishing was the one trade with which I was familiar. From boatmen who had put in at Antioch, I learned that better fishing was possible in the Sea of Galilee

than here, and that it was better near Capernaum than at any other point, because warm springs poured their waters into the sea at that point, tempering the water to such a degree that the fish were attracted to it in great schools.

My parents at last yielded to my entreaties, and consented to return to Palestine. I think that they were very happy over their decision, for no Israelite was ever content or happy for a long time away from his beloved land. We settled at Capernaum. I purchased nets and boats and secured a crew, and, from the very first, fortune smiled upon me.

It was here that one day we were all greatly stirred by the report that a great prophet had come out of the desert declaring that the Messiah was about to appear, or about to reveal himself, for according to this one He was already among us, but unrecognized.

Several from the near-by villages went to hear the prophet, and came back deeply impressed by what they had heard.

Then, one day, while we were at work upon our catch and our nets, a stranger stood beside us and watched us at our work. He was quite close to where acquaintances of mine, Andrew and Simon, and James and John, had landed. After watching them for a time, He spoke to them, and I saw them drop their nets, leave their boats, and go away with Him. I did not hear what He said to them, but some, who did, said that He asked them to follow Him, promising them, in return, to teach them to catch men.

I was not very much impressed, except by the folly of these fishermen, who were among the best about

Capernaum; for they were giving up a very profitable business for something of which they knew nothing. After a few weeks they returned for a time, and they spoke much and very earnestly of their faith in Him as the Messiah. I could not feel as enthusiastic or as sure as they, but the more they told of what they had seen and heard, the more interested I became, and the more inquisitive. One day, weeks later, He came again to Capernaum, and immediately those who had accompanied Him on His first visit attached themselves to Him. I was eager now to learn of Him for myself, and I stayed close to the group. I saw miracle after miracle performed by Him—the healing of Simon's wife's mother, the freeing of one demonized, the cleansing of a leper—with such ease by Him that I could no longer doubt what had been told me by the others, nor could I longer hold in subjection my longing to be one of those close to Him. And I, just as willingly as John and James and Simon and Andrew, left my boat, and business, and home, and followed Him.

I found my reticence dissolving and my heart warming to Him. The longer I was with Him, the stronger grew my affection for Him and my confidence in Him, until I was sure that nothing could ever turn me from Him, or weaken my faith in Him.

Very early in my association with Him, He began to speak to us of His rejection, betrayal, death and resurrection from the dead; but, for some reason, we were deaf to all these words, while we dreamed happily of our nation and of ourselves under His wonderful rule.

I shall not dwell upon those months that intervened between my acceptance of His invitation and the last few months of His life. Others may have told you, or may yet tell you, of those times. I will confine myself to the last brief weeks of our association together.

My first real apprehension of harm coming to Him, at the hands of His countrymen, came at the close of the Feast of Tabernacles, which we had attended. The day following the end of the feast, we came with Jesus to the Temple, where a crowd had gathered about Him, and, sitting down, He began to speak to them. He was soon interrupted by the entrance of a group of men who were pushing before them a woman, who, they said, had been taken in sin. They demanded that Jesus pass judgment upon her, reminding Him that by the Law of Moses she ought to die. After sending them away in confusion and shame, and letting the woman depart without punishment, but with the urge to forsake her sin, He continued to speak to His audience, charging them with the intent to destroy Him, and plainly stating that their boast of having Abraham for an ancestor was but a cloak concealing their true parentage, the Devil. I saw them stoop down and pick up stones. Their faces were flushed with anger, leaving no doubt of their purpose. I was overwhelmed with fear for Him, but He appeared utterly unafraid. Once more, when He spoke of Abraham, rejoicing because he had seen His day, they cried out, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" To this He replied, "Before Abraham was, I existed." At this they became an infuriated mob, and would have

slain Him at once, by stoning; but He avoided them, and passed to safety.

At the Feast of Dedication, Jesus spoke to the throng from Solomon's porch, and in answer to their demand that He tell them plainly whether or no He were the Christ, He asserted that by word of mouth and by miracles which He had performed in His Father's name, He had already answered this question, but they had not believed because they were not of His fold. At His statement that He and His Father were one, the Jews took up stones to stone Him.

I could not understand their action nor their attitude, but I was very glad when we left Jerusalem and passed from Judea into Perea.

While here, messengers came from Bethany announcing that Lazarus, a very dear friend of Jesus, one who had often entertained Him and us, was very ill, and urging Him to come at once. When we heard this request, we all protested against His return to Judea because of the recent attempt to stone Him. But when He announced His purpose to go, I could see only one result—His death, in some form. I had come to love Him so passionately that I did not care to live without Him, and I declared to the disciples my intention to return with Him and to die with Him, if this were God's will. When He started for Judea, no one of the twelve remained in Perea.

Before we had reached the end of our journey, Lazarus died. The news of our arrival at Bethany quickly reached the home of Mary and Martha, where friends were still mourning with them, and the sisters came quickly to the place of burial, near which we were

waiting. They led us to the tomb, where they stood silent and weeping. Jesus directed that the stone be removed from the grave, overcoming the protest of the sisters that decomposition had already set in, by the quietly uttered words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; whosoever believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Willing hands rolled back the stone, and Jesus, stooping down, called, "Lazarus, come forth!" To the amazement, but also to the great joy of all, Lazarus, who had been in the tomb four days, came forth and was unbound and restored to his sisters.

News of such a miracle as this could not be suppressed, and no one who had witnessed it either wanted or intended to suppress it. Word quickly reached not only Bethany but Jerusalem, and multitudes came to see Lazarus and to rejoice with Mary and Martha over his restoration to life.

Great consternation prevailed among the rulers of the people. They were quick to foresee the results of this wonderful event, and the outcome was the determination to put both Jesus and Lazarus to death.

The Feast of the Passover was not far off, and we remained out of the city until about one week before the great day. We readily sensed the hostility of the Scribes, Pharisees and Priests, and we feared the outcome. Still, none of us could believe that any one who could understand Jesus would wish to harm Him.

But the day came when we realized that our fears were not unfounded. The gathering storm of hatred broke at last, reaching its most terrible hour when we

saw Him condemned and nailed to the cursed cross on the hill of Golgotha.

I stood with the other disciples, men and women, and the mother of Jesus, not far from the cross. I saw nothing but the awful cruelty of it all. The wounds in His hands and feet and side and brow, were all that I could vision. These, I knew, I never could forget.

When death claimed Him, I aided those who took His body, bruised and broken, down from the cross, and I helped to bear it to the tomb in the garden, close by, wherein we laid Him.

To describe my emotions at that time is utterly impossible. My heart, so full of love for Him, was empty of all else but grief. My hope for Him, my nation, and myself, that had been so strong, was utterly shattered. My faith in Him, which had seemed to me so stable, was shaken to its foundation.

I do not know where I spent that night after His crucifixion. I recall nothing of what I did, except my weeping. It seemed that the fountain of my tears would never run dry. I wanted to see no one. I wanted to speak to no one. At times I became calm through exhaustion, and then the wounds would rise before me; I would hear again His cries, and my tears would start afresh.

I can not tell you how I found my way to the upper room where we had eaten the feast together. But at last I found it, and, after assuring themselves that it was I, those within unbarred the door, and I found myself with a company of about an hundred, as sadly depressed as I. I remained with them during the day, but when night came I could not stay. I rushed out into

the darkness, and did not return until days had passed. At last, I came back, and found the company greatly changed. No tears marked their faces, as when I last had been with them. No sobs shook strong frames as on that dreadful day. Instead, their eyes were bright. Happy smiles were on every face. I was amazed, shocked that such deep grief could so soon pass. My own eyes were still dimmed by tears. They remembered that I had not been with them for some days, and they at once surrounded me, crying, "Thomas, have you not heard? Dry your tears, dear comrade, for Jesus is not dead, but is risen, as He said."

"Risen from the dead? Risen from the dead?" I cried. "What do you mean? How do you know? Do not try to deceive me!"

Then they told me quickly of the successive appearances of Jesus to different ones of them on the first day of the week. To Mary at the sepulcher. To the women as they were returning from the grave. To Peter in Galilee. To the two on the way to Emmaus, and to all in the upper room the same night. I listened to their words. They seemed sincere, but I feared that they had been deceived, seeing, maybe, a vision, but not the real living Jesus.

I said a little while ago that I was not easy to persuade. Peter would grasp a truth quickly, and act impulsively. John also was quick to react to impressions, but I was not so constituted.

I could see nothing as yet but the cruel cross, and those still more cruel wounds. The disciples did not chide me, or attempt to force their faith upon me against my will; but there was in all of them a sub-

lime confidence that what they had told me was true, that they had seen their Lord alive after the cross and the grave. And their joy was real, and wonderful to witness.

No, so great a fact as this I could not accept on the testimony of others. I had, in those days apart from them, thought of all of Jesus' words concerning His death and resurrection. I had formulated requirements that must be met before I would believe these words true, after what I had seen at Golgotha. I made these known to them. I did not blame them or criticise their position, but I said to them: "You have seen Him, you say; so must I see Him; and I will not join you in your belief in His resurrection from the dead until I have additional proof. Not only must I see Him, and His wounds, which I can never forget; but I will not believe until I shall have put my finger into the print of the nails and shall have thrust my hand into His wounded side.

They said nothing. They urged me to remain with them, which I did throughout the week. Again the first day of the week had come, and there seemed to be an air of suppressed excitement and expectation in the upper room. Night fell and—suddenly—He stood among us with the well-known and well-loved words of salutation upon His lips, "Peace be unto you! Peace be unto you!"

There was no mistake about resemblance. I could never forget His face. The marks of the cross were upon Him, the nail prints and the wounds of the thorns. If the others had such convincing proof as this, I could not blame them for their belief. To say that I

was awed, is to express my feeling mildly. For a moment only, this tense situation continued. He was speaking, speaking to me! "Thomas," He said, "reach hither thy finger, and put it into the wounds in my hands, and thrust thy hand into my wounded side, and be not faithless but believing."

I felt a great burden roll from my heart. Dimness no longer clouded my vision. A joy such as I had never known, welled up within me. For a moment I could not speak, and then, with a glad cry, I ran to Him and fell at His blessed, wounded feet, crying over and over again, "My Lord and my God! My Lord and my God!"

He spoke no harsh word because I had not accepted the word of Peter and John and the others, but He said, "Blessed art thou, Thomas, in that thou hast seen and believed; but blessed, too, are those who shall not be able to see what you have seen this day, and yet shall believe on me as their Saviour, risen from the dead."

Our little group, which for three years had followed Him, was again united in our common faith in Him as the Risen Lord and the Divine Redeemer.

Pentecost came, with its strange gift of power. Peter spoke of Jesus to the multitudes, not as a miracle worker, nor even as the greatest of all teachers, nor even as the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world for the remission of sin, nor as the Son of God, but as the Risen Christ. Three thousand of those who heard, believed, and from the joy plainly written on their faces I realized what Jesus meant in those last words to me, "Happy are those, Thomas,

who have not seen what you have seen, who yet shall believe."

I do not know why I should not have accepted this great fact as readily as I had accepted others. I did Him a wrong, a great wrong, to doubt His rising from the dead. Over and over again He had told us that this was the divine plan. As I recall His words to us, nothing was more emphasized by Him than this.

When Andrew and John told me that John the Baptist had declared Him to be the Christ, I found no trouble in accepting John's words as true.

When Peter said of Him, and to Him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," I accepted at once, without difficulty, His deity.

Nothing that He ever said about Himself shook my faith in Him. When He stood and cried, "I am the bread of life: . . . I am the water of life," I was in no way startled or puzzled. Even when many of those who had been with us left Him and followed no more with us, I did not find His saying hard to believe. Even when we had stood, only a short time before, at the grave of Lazarus, and I had heard Him say, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; if any man believe in me, tho he die, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die," I had bowed my head in worship, and believed that His words were true, especially when I saw Lazarus come forth from the tomb at His command.

I had seen some marvelous things done by Him. I had seen ten lepers cleansed of their dreadful malady. I had been with Him when He gave sight to the man born blind, a thing never before done. I saw many

others whose sight He had restored. I saw the sad company near Nain stopped by Him, and the widow's son restored to life.

I realize now that I had no sufficient reason to doubt the words of those who tried to persuade me that He had risen from the grave—from among the dead. But the cross was so terrible, the wounds so cruel, that my mind refused everything else, in the way of proof, save what would come to me through sight and touch. Faith was totally eclipsed.

I know now that it was not merely a mistake, but that I was absolutely wrong in clinging to one difficulty, insisting that it be cleared up to my satisfaction, and in my one prescribed way, before faith could live. It was worse than a mistake.

As we stood together for the last time on the Mount of Olives, and His last words were spoken to us—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—I realized the certain and utter failure of this great task which He assigned to us, if my own requirement for faith—except I put my finger into the print of the nails in His hands and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe—were made a universal demand before faith could be acknowledged; if those to whom we told the story of the risen Christ would say to us, "Show us the wounds of the cross, and we will believe in the resurrection." True indeed were the words of Jesus, "Happy art thou, Thomas, because you have seen, and faith has come to you; but even happier than you are those who, in the ages yet to come, will accept me as their Saviour, whose desire

to see what you have seen can not be gratified, but whose faith that I died and rose again for their salvation will grow strong and beautiful."

(I am happy in the certainty of this greatest miracle of all the ages, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and my one great hope is that I may have atoned in service for my lapse into uncertainty and unbelief, and that my faith, which was founded upon and fixed by both sight and touch, may generate a faith founded upon neither of these, but upon my testimony, in the hearts of many who shall hear my words; a faith that shall weather every storm that blows; a faith in Him that shall increase in strength and glory, as the ages pass, until every tongue shall confess Him, as I did, to be the Risen, Glorious Christ, his Lord and his God, to the glory of the Father.)

XI

JUDAS, THE DISHONEST DISCIPLE, AND THE BETRAYER OF HIS LORD

"And after the sop, Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, 'What thou doest, do quickly.'

"Now no man at the table knew for what intent He spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or that he should give something to the poor.

"He then, having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night."

XI

JUDAS, THE DISHONEST DISCIPLE, AND THE BETRAYER OF HIS LORD

MY life in its early years was not very different from the lives of other Hebrew youths of my day. I was born in the little village of Kerioth, within the tribal boundaries of Judah. I very soon discovered that so small a place offered little opportunity for advancement in any line, particularly in business, to which I seemed to have a marked leaning, and for which I had a strong liking. It was an inland village, and was more inactive than towns of the same size situated on the Sea of Galilee, where fishing offered more or less satisfactory returns for one's industry.

I felt very keenly the restrictions of Kerioth; for I was given much to day dreaming, and found myself frequently imagining myself in places of large responsibility, and often I would picture myself as a man of great wealth and large influence. These fanciful thoughts gained more than ordinary hold upon me, and I really came to regard them as almost prophetic. They seemed to be more in the nature of visions than mere idle day dreamings.

However, I lived here in Kerioth with my parents until I had reached manhood, attending the feasts of my people at Jerusalem, which was only about twenty-five miles directly north of my home. I was, possibly,

more often in Jerusalem than many of the young men from the more remote parts of the country, because of this proximity to the religious and civil center of my country. A day's easy journey would enable me to reach the Holy City. Little of importance there was missed by me. I loved to visit Jerusalem because of its great beauty. I loved to sit where I could see the wonderful temple buildings; for they spoke to me of the day when Rome's hateful rule would end, and when, according to our prophecies, the Restorer would come and clothe these buildings and the city with a new and never-fading glory; when the Messiah would appear, and enter into this very temple, and renew and increase our consecration to Jehovah; when my nation, once supremely glorious, would extend its sway over all the earth, and gather tribute from North and South, and East and West, until gold and silver would be as they were in the days of Solomon, as stones in the streets, because of their abundance.

I had heard my parents tell of the visit of the wise men to Jerusalem in search of Him who should be born King of the Jews. They had told me many times the story coming out of Bethlehem, of the shepherds, and the birth of One who was declared by angel messengers to be this very One of whom Moses and the prophets had so frequently made mention; the One who, every Israelite was hoping, might come in our day. But nothing had been seen or heard of Him for nearly thirty years, and we had come to regard this tale as we regarded other stories that had been told us in childhood.

I used to muse, while sitting and admiring the

Temple and the city, so beautifully situated; and into my heart there would come unbidden, but not unwelcome, a dream of my own connection with this New Israel, this world power, this new and mighty ruler; and I always thought of myself as in a place of prominence, with the control of the revenues of the nation in my hands.

Why this was true I do not know; I never could explain it, for nothing could possibly have been more in contrast than this was with what I had been accustomed to. My father had a small shop in Kerioth. Our needs were few, but we were always close to hunger, and, as a child, I had very few treats, such as children love, because the cost was beyond obtaining. When we went to the feasts, it was the custom to dress in the brightest colors, but my own garments were always faded and almost threadbare. I always felt that I must stand back where I would not be conspicuous, and give the place where I really wanted to be, to some one more fittingly clothed. This hurt me, for I was proud, and I determined that if there were any way by which I could break the awful bondage of this poverty, from which I had so cruelly suffered even from my childhood years, I would avail myself of it at any cost.

One day there came into the shop a man who had been up in the north country, and he told me of the great commotion that prevailed near Capernaum, owing to the preaching of one who reminded everybody who saw and heard him of the prophets of old. He was clad in a cloak of camel's hair. His voice rang with prophetic earnestness, and his words were sat-

urated with prophetic authority. I was told of the crowds that were about him daily, and their deep interest in what he said, and of their demand for baptism, the baptism of repentance, which he offered.

It was a long way to where this new prophet was preaching, and I did not attempt to hear him, but I was particularly interested in what was said to be the main portion of his message: "Repent ye, repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." If the Kingdom had come, surely the King could not be far from his throne. I was thrilled with the thought that the prophecies of many centuries might be near their fulfilment. Was it strange that these visions of which I have spoken—or call them day-dreams, if you wish—came to me more frequently and more forcefully? *The Kingdom at hand! The King approaching! Tribute! Power! Glory!* It was too good to be true. *And—in my day!*

Of every stranger from the north country I eagerly inquired, and found the report of the first visitor confirmed. My interest grew by leaps and bounds, but I could not leave Kerioth. The cost of the journey to the regions of Bethabara could not be provided.

My body might be imprisoned in Kerioth by the galling chains of poverty, but my mind could not be so confined, and I gave it the largest liberty. Days passed, and again from the north—from Galilee—came the report that another great commotion had been aroused by the appearance there of one, Jesus of Nazareth, who was not unlike John, but who was described as even greater than he. Just as in the case of John, we were told, the multitudes crowded about

Him, coming from even wider horizons and in greater numbers. Soon we were regaled with accounts of miracles, such as the prophets had performed, but greater, which He had performed. You can imagine what excitement prevailed in Kerioth, into which place so little of news from the outside world filtered. It was rumored that Jerusalem had heard of Him, and had sent men from the Sanhedrin to investigate, and that these had returned with the report that the people were beginning to regard Him as the Messiah.

I decided that I could wait no longer. So I started for Jerusalem, where, I felt, full information could be obtained; for it was one of the duties of the Sanhedrin to watch carefully for false teachers and heretics; to apprehend them and bring them to trial, that the faith of the fathers might not be jeopardized, and that no child of Abraham might be guilty of defection.

Upon arriving at Jerusalem, I found everywhere a subdued excitement. Men stopped each other on the street and discussed the latest report. There was some jesting, for false prophets had come before; but the great majority, especially "The Seventy," seemed to feel that this one could not be so classed or so dismissed.

I spent much time about the meeting-place of the Sanhedrin, and from the faces of the members of this, our highest court, I was aware of the seriousness with which they regarded this person.

One day, as I was thus sitting, there passed through the street, near at hand, a man who was radiant with happiness. He was shouting in a loud voice that he had been an outcast, a leper, but had been healed by the

touch of one, Jesus of Nazareth, and that he was now on his way to the priest to be declared clean, so that he might return to his home and his family in Jerusalem, from whom he had been separated for years. The crowd held back from him, because he was still unclean. I saw him enter the priest's quarters. With others I waited until he came out with the priestly sanction, and then we followed him, close-up, to his home, where, after greeting his family, he told us of his experience, and how this Jesus had actually healed him of his dread malady.

At once I decided to see for myself, and hurried away toward Capernaum, where this healed one had said He might be found. Here I found Him. I did not go to Him at once. I decided that I would not be a fool—that I would make careful investigation before I would approach Jesus personally. So I spent much time inquiring of those who had been there a long time what had been done, what they themselves had seen; what they had heard and what they thought of Him. The answers that I received were all of one kind. There was no difference of opinion. "We have never heard such words. . . . We have never seen such power. . . . If this one is not the Christ, when He, the Christ, really does come, can He do greater works than this one does?"

When He spoke, I listened closely. Day after day I was in the throng about Him. I saw Him perform many miracles of healing, both by word and by touch. Nothing seemed to be too hard for Him to accomplish. Nothing baffled Him. I noticed a little group of men who seemed to be closer to him than any of the

throng. These I approached, one by one—Simon, Andrew, John and James—and found that they were persuaded that He was the Christ; so little did they doubt, indeed, that when He had invited them, a short time before, to follow Him, they left their homes, occupations, associates, and followed—and had not as yet regretted it. I asked them to arrange a meeting for me when I might talk with Him intimately. This was done, and, after a brief conversation, He extended to me the invitation that the others had received. I did not accept at once, for there were certain things of which I wished to assure myself. Especially did I wish to weigh carefully the probability of realizing my day-dreams of position and power, and of personal profit, in the new kingdom. Of this I must feel sure.

I remained with this smaller group for several days. This, of course, gave me added opportunity for conversation with Jesus at night, while I, during the days, pursued my practise of sounding out the crowds which were growing larger and larger with every passing day. Coming, as they did, from different sections, I felt that as they regarded Him, so would their communities regard Him upon their return and report. There was but one sentiment: That He was the Christ of God. Of course, there were some, especially among the Scribes and Pharisees, who expressed partial or total rejection of the opinion of the throng; but these were few in number, and so, one day, I approached Him and announced my readiness to accept His invitation to follow Him. The others seemed glad to have me with them, and I was very happy over my decision. Soon there were twelve of us in the selected group, and

Jesus appeared to be satisfied, for no more special invitations were given. I found in conversation with the others that they had much the same hope that I had about the Kingdom and our probable place in it. They had known Him longer than I had, and so I felt assured that my hopes would be realized in and through Him.

We were almost constantly on the move, but gradually approaching Jerusalem and my home neighborhood. I felt no little pride in returning to my home in such close relationship to One whose fame had spread far and wide, and whose journey was impeded by the rapidly increasing crowds. Little by little, on these journeys, we twelve would discuss our *relative* positions in the Kingdom, and then trouble would quickly develop. I never made claim to the chief place, but I did plead my business experience—which I very greatly exaggerated—as a reason for my being given charge of the finances of the Kingdom. My claim was not disputed by any one, not even by Matthew, and I was more than delighted when they voted me the treasurer of the funds that might be acquired. I at once procured a purse, and into it each dropped what coins he had, and I was directed to make whatever purchases were needed, paying for them from this common fund. I wanted to impress them and Jesus with my ability, and so every inherited or acquired trick of buying or bartering was brought into use, and more than once Jesus himself commended me.

I felt strongly that our first visit to Jerusalem would give me some definite basis for judging the outlook for the Kingdom and the King. To my great delight,

I found that His fame had preceded Him, and that Jerusalem was deeply interested in His appearance. Everywhere we heard the question "Where is He?" No one asked "Where is who?" This indicated the prevailing conviction that He was the Christ. I felt quite sure that, after we had visited all sections of our land, the King would declare Himself, and the Kingdom would enter upon its most prosperous and glorious period.

The feeling grew upon me that what I had given up to accept His invitation would soon return to me multiplied a thousandfold. I had, of course, learned to regard Jesus highly, and had even come to love Him. But I could not and I would not let anything obscure my chief object in following Him, namely, to escape the poverty which had always oppressed me—to obtain such wealth as would enable me to obtain a place of respect and power in my nation. This was and must ever remain uppermost.

For a year, all went well, and our hopes rose to new heights. Rome seemed apprehensive. Soldiers were always on hand. The Sanhedrin also showed a subdued fear of the loss of place and power, for Jesus spoke reprovingly of much of their teaching.

Then strange changes occurred in Jesus Himself. Instead of seeking publicity, or popularity, He seemed to shun it. For long periods of time He would not appear. Sometimes He would go out of the bounds of our own land for quiet and rest. One day we were sitting out on the hillside, and some one asked Him to tell us of His temptation in the wilderness, following close upon John's baptism. He told us particularly of

His final experience—how the Devil suggested the turning of stones into bread. Then He told of the Devil taking Him up on the pinnacle of the temple, and suggesting that He hurl Himself down to the street below, in this way convincing the Jews of His Messiahship; for they were expecting such a miraculous appearing. This, He told us, He had refused to do; but I could see no reason for His refusal. Then, He told us of being taken up into a high mountain, from which the kingdoms of the world, of all time, were made visible to Him, and of His receiving the promise of all these, with their wealth, and power, and glory, in return for bowing down *for just one moment* and worshiping the Devil. And He told us that He had *refused* this offer! I felt the blood mounting to my temples. I was glad that He did not see me, for He must have read my thoughts. I could scarce refrain from crying out, "Fool, idiot, fool!" And from that moment I began to lose confidence in the King and the Kingdom.

Other things followed in rapid succession. One day a great crowd had assembled about Him, and had listened all day long to Him. Night was approaching, and we went to Jesus and suggested that He send the people away, so that they might obtain food; but He directed us to feed them. This was unthinkable, for we had no adequate supply and could not procure one. There was a lad with us who had brought his little lunch along, a few cakes and a few dried fish. Jesus seated the multitudes in an orderly manner, and then, taking the cakes and the fish, blessed them and gave them to us with the command to break and give of

them to everybody. The result was that the company of more than five thousand men, besides women and children, had enough and to spare. Amazed, they would have then and there taken Him and made Him King, but He refused to let them. What did He mean by this? The idea of refusing an offered crown, and scepter, and throne! The Kingdom's outlines grew less distinct and my vision became blurred.

I became morose, and then it was that I determined not to be altogether cheated. I was still treasurer of the twelve. We had not a large sum, but there was quite a comfortable amount in the common purse. It was not easy, at first, to take that which belonged to my friends; but I did not take a large amount at any time, feeling that I might be called upon to give an accounting. I took just enough to allow me some little luxury or comfort that I craved. No questions were ever asked, and larger and larger sums were extracted and spent.

While this was going on, I found that I was less and less interested in the words and miracles of Jesus. I did not withdraw from the company, for I still had a little hope. But one day—I shall never forget it—we were again sitting alone, and Jesus spoke of a subject that had been discussed early in His ministry—His death upon the cross. He spoke so emphatically of it that it seemed that the plot had already been laid, the cross provided, the parts assigned, the sledge and the nails made ready. I always wanted to ask Him to drop the subject, because our prophets had emphatically declared that the Messiah should live forever, and that of His kingdom there should be no end. But

He insisted that He would die upon the cross, and He hinted quite strongly that some one close to Him would aid in the tragedy.

This talk fully decided me to miss no opportunity to provide for myself, in case we had been deceived in our estimate of Him. More and more frequently I took sums from the common fund. I was greatly distressed, too, as time passed and the Kingdom appeared a thing more and more remote, because the crowds became smaller and smaller.

As the third year of our association advanced, we were again on our way to Jerusalem to attend the great feast, the Passover. Crowds accompanied us on our way; but I was not happy, for I had read the decree of the Sanhedrin, and had divined its import. I was certain that its members had come to some definite understanding, and this judgment was confirmed by the heckling to which Jesus was almost daily subjected. At last we reached Bethany. We had been here often. Only recently, Lazarus had been raised from the dead by Jesus. To show their gratitude to Jesus, a feast had been provided by Simon and his daughters, Mary and Martha, to which we and their friends had been invited. We were all at the table, partaking of the splendid food which had been placed before us, when, all at once, the room was filled with the most ravishing perfume. All recognized it as the delicately scented and costly nard—the most priceless of all perfumes. All stopped eating and sought its source. We discovered Mary standing at the feet of Jesus, holding in her hands the fragments of an alabaster box, from which there were still falling upon Him drops of this costly

unguent. It was not hard to compute its worth—two hundred pence, at least! It was so volatile, that in a very few moments the breeze, coming in through windows and doors, would blow it away, and nothing but the broken box would remain. Almost a year's wage for a man, blown away in a moment of time! I could see in this act nothing but a foolish sentiment and a desire to do the spectacular; and if Mary had only thought a moment, she would have realized that the less attention she attracted to herself the better; for her life, until recently, had been spectacular enough.

When I noticed the perfume growing fainter in the room, and realized that two hundred pennyworth of value had been literally thrown away, wasted, I cried out—I could not help it—"Why was not this sold and its value given to the poor, if she wanted to show gratitude for the bringing back of Lazarus? Why this waste?" It was a good effort at concealing my real motive in protesting. I was still the treasurer of the twelve, and an extra two hundred pence in the purse would have enabled me to abstract a goodly sum, which I could have placed with the money changers whom I knew in Jerusalem, so near my home, and which, at their usurious rates, would very rapidly have increased to a pleasing sum.

Jesus rebuked us all, and again brought the disagreeable subject of His death before us.

The next day was the Sabbath. Early, we were on the way to the city. As we drew near to Bethphage, Jesus directed two of our company to go into the village and bring back an ass which they would find tied there with its dam. None of us had the least thought

of what He would do with this beast when it should be brought to Him, but they went, and when they returned, the meaning of it all flashed upon us at the same moment. As with a single movement, we stripped off our outer garments and flung them upon the back of the beast; we then lifted Him and set Him upon this improvised saddle, and then, in a wild delirium of joy, we seized branches of palm-trees which grew near by, and, waving them, shouted "Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Above our cries of gladness, we seemed to hear the ringing voice of the prophet crying, "Rejoice, O Daughter of Zion, for behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." We were quickly joined by great numbers of Passover pilgrims, who were as thrilled as we, and who joined us in our glad cry. For a time I forgot all my previous disappointment. I can not describe my feelings as I heard the glad cry of this great and ever-increasing multitude, as they shouted "Hosanna! Hosanna!" By the triumph, which now appeared so certain, the vision of the Kingdom became again very distinct, and Jesus never looked more a King.

Pilate and his hirelings made no attempt to check or to disperse or subdue what appeared to me to be a revolution. Could it be that the overthrow of Rome was to be so easily accomplished? No attempt was made by the Sanhedrin to stop us. On through the streets of Jerusalem! On to the Temple, which had never looked so beautiful to me, even when I dreamed of it in the day of its coming glory.

As He entered the court, there was a quick scattering of those who trafficked in the requisites for the feast. Oh! It was simply glorious! All day long I listened, but heard nothing that He said. All day long I looked, but saw nothing that He did; for the vision of my preferment in the Kingdom dimmed all else, and the clinking of the gold and silver of my dreams drowned out all other sounds. I was so sure!

But when night approached, and we went again to Bethany, all the glory of the day had changed to gloom, for a great change had occurred. I can not explain it, I never could understand it, but I knew that everything was lost. I was exceeding bitter and sore at heart. I could not sleep, and the more I recalled the events of the day, the more certain it appeared that the time of my opportunity was limited. I determined, therefore, to save as much out of the wreckage as I could. I left the home of Lazarus, and walked, not knowing where I went, not caring; but I found that, unconsciously, I had chosen the road to Jerusalem over which we had gone to the city in the morning so full of hope and happiness. I kept on, and soon found myself in Jerusalem. I walked on toward the Temple, and was surprized to see a light in the meeting-place of The Seventy. I had been there often before and felt no embarrassment at entering. I sat down with others, and heard the leaders of my people discussing heatedly the events of the day; heard them talking now quite openly of their plans to destroy Jesus; heard them confess their greatest difficulty—the obtaining of Him without arousing the multitudes who might attempt His rescue. I heard their declaration that they would

pay well for this. Here was my opportunity, thrown providentially, it seemed to me, directly in my pathway.

I approached the High Priest; told him who I was—Judas of Kerioth, one of the twelve—and asked him what sum would be paid for His delivery into their hands. He replied, "Thirty pieces of silver." That was more than I could make in my shop in Kerioth in a year; more than I could make in six months at hard toil in the fields. The eyes of the High Priest never left mine. They seemed to hold me with an irresistible power. Others of The Seventy came quickly, seeming to have sensed something important, and closed in about us. Something seemed to die within me. I tried to obtain more money, but they began to talk of a smaller sum. I knew that I had compromised myself, and so did they, and we both knew that I was in their power. Quickly I agreed to their price. Plans were made, and I hurried back to Bethany with the thirty pieces of silver in the bag. I reached Bethany and assumed sleep. None had missed me. And when morning came, I arose and, with the rest, broke the fast of the night.

Little or nothing was done until the night of the feast. Two of the disciples set out for the city early in the afternoon for the purpose of preparing the paschal meal. No one, not even they, knew where we would celebrate our independence day. But when evening came, Jesus and the ten of us made our way to the city. I determined that by no act of mine should my intention be even suspected, so I joined with the others in that oft-recurring discussion of our place in the Kingdom, and for once I made bold claim to a

leading place. At last we reached Jerusalem, and Jesus led us to the home of one of the believers—led us directly to the upper room, where all had been made ready for us.

Bound to maintain an attitude of loyalty, I remained close to Jesus, and when He took His place at the table, I took the couch next to Him, John reclining on the couch nearest to Him on the other side. The old dispute, of which I have spoken, had made all of the company engaging in it so angry that we did not wash the dust from our own feet, nor did we offer to wash the feet of Jesus. When we were all at the table, Jesus Himself rose, girded Himself with a towel, and washed the feet of all of us; and when He again took His place among us, He gave me the first intimation that He suspected, or knew, what I had done, when He said, "I have washed your feet, but *ye are not all clean.*" I recalled words spoken by Him months before: "Have I not chosen you twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?" Somehow I was sure He knew, but it was too late now to break my agreement with the High Priest.

I drew a little closer to Him, and then we began to eat the feast. Soon He was speaking again: "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; for I say truly unto you that one of you shall betray me." I started, but quickly regained my self-control. The feast was forgotten, and great depression prevailed. John turned quickly to Him and asked, "Master, is it I?" Peter, across the table, took up the question, and from him it passed from one to the other down his side of the table, across the end and up the side where we

were sitting, each asking the question, "Master, is it I?" It was getting rather unpleasant and uncomfortable for me, altho Jesus had answered no one "Yes" or "No," but "It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish." At last it was my turn. In a whisper, after as long a delay as was possible, I asked "Is it I?" In a whisper, He replied "Yes." He knew! He knew!

I cannot describe the feeling that came over me with His answer. All the love that I had had for Him was turned to bitterest hatred. I remained, for I was the only one who knew His answer to my question. The feast was resumed. There were four dishes on the table for convenience. Only three could dip into the same dish easily. The elimination, "One that dippeth with me in the dish," spoken in answer to John's question, had narrowed the question of guilt down to John or me, for we alone would dip into the same dish with Jesus. The others did not seem to notice it, but John did. I was angry at this revelation, and rose from the table and started for the door, Jesus saying, as I went out, "What thou doest, do quickly." Adamant could not have been more firmly set, nor more devoid of feeling or affection than I.

I went direct to the residence of the High Priest, and found everything as agreed; the soldiers were ready, and we started immediately. We hurried to the home of the disciple where we had celebrated the feast, hoping to make a quick arrest and return to the assembled Sanhedrin. He was not there, and no information could be obtained as to where He had gone, but I bethought me of the Garden of Gethsemane, where we sometimes went for rest and prayer. We hastened

thither. Soon I saw Him coming toward us, the others of the twelve following close. I approached Him as tho there was nothing unusual in my presence or act, and kissed Him again and again on the cheek. I called him "Master," as was my custom, for this was the agreed-upon sign of identification. His only protest was a question which pricked me to the heart—"Judas, son of Simon, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"

No time was wasted by the guard. Rushing forward, they bound Him and led Him away. I accompanied them to the court of the Sanhedrin, that The Seventy might know that I had kept my bargain; but when I saw them accept Him at the hands of the soldiers, I knew my part was done. I tarried through the trial, until I heard Him condemned to death for blasphemy. I heard the plan to hurry Him to Pilate and then early to the cross.

I saw them lead Him as a condemned criminal over the bridge to Pilate's court. Then, what I had done became clear to me in its awfulness. I had not expected this. Surely He, who had calmed the sea by a word; surely He, who had overruled every law of nature; He, who had passed more than once unharmed, and even unseen, through the throngs that would have harmed Him; He, who but an hour before had caused all of the guard to go backward and fall to the ground —surely, He would escape this trap as He had escaped others. I watched and waited, but He made no effort to break the bonds with which He had been bound in the Garden. I followed Him into Pilate's court, where I heard Pilate say, "Take ye Him and crucify Him."

Then I knew! The horror of what I had done burst full upon me. I had betrayed Him who had never harmed me, or any one else, for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave.

I hurried from Pilate's hall to the Sanhedrin's chambers. Here I found a group of priests. Mad with the knowledge of what I had done, I rushed to them and begged them to release Jesus. They laughed at me. I cried, "I have betrayed innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See thou to that." And the throng was already at Calvary. Before, I saw only the gain. Now I saw only the awfulness of my guilt. But it was too late. They had nailed Him to the cross, and on that cross He died.

I can see it all clearly now: The separate steps by which my besetting sin of greed had mastered me. The early craving for riches while still in Kerioth, and in poverty. The hope of gain that led me to join the companions of Jesus, the disciples whom He had called, and to follow Him for almost three years. The actual dishonesty of which I was guilty while treasurer of the band. My cruel criticism, as waste, of the ointment, Mary's expression of love for her Master. The final bargain with the Sanhedrin, to betray Him into their hands, and the actual betrayal. These were all but steps in the development within me of the cursed craving for gold.

I wish that, before night envelops me—for I have now no desire to live, with the cursed sin of His betrayal upon my soul—I wish that I might warn every man and woman, especially every young man and woman, in whose hearts the fires of ambition burn so

brightly, against this awful canker of covetousness. There is nothing like it among the sins of men.

Money in itself is harmless. It is like the sunshine and the rain—like light and darkness. Proportioned aright, they bring blessings to mankind. By themselves, they bring death. So money, if kept in its proper place, as servant, under strict control, is capable of accomplishing great good. But money, in the Master's room, is the greatest curse that man can know. At its bidding the most hideous crimes are committed. The taskmasters of Egypt were angels of mercy from heaven compared to it. For its obtaining, men hawk their honor in the streets, and women vend their virtue in the market-place. It will sear conscience as red-hot iron scorches the flesh of the little child. It will harden the heart as steel is hardened by the plunge into cold water. It will deaden all human affection as the chill of winter blights the beauty and the brightness of the summer days. In all the category of sins there is no transgression that will so close the door of the soul against the entrance of the Saviour of men. There is no other transgression that will so heartlessly, so completely, drive out of the life of a man everything noble, beautiful, God-like, even Christ Himself, as greed for gold, as money, when it has become the master.

I wish that I could cry out so that my voice would reach every young man and woman, every boy and girl in all the ages that shall ever be until the Lord, whom I sold so cheaply, shall be indeed crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. I would warn them that gold without God is the meanest prize upon which

the heart can be fixed—that gold without Christ is cold, cruel, crushing, killing.

I wish that they would hear me ere the darkness of death closes in about me, as I repeat a single sentence from the many that fell from the lips of Jesus. He knew men's hearts. He knew mine. He knew the perils, and prescribed a safeguard, a remedy. Hear it: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things needed shall be added unto you, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of them."

Crown Christ, not Money, King. Admit Him, not Money, as master of your heart and life, and you will avoid the sin from whose guilt neither time nor eternity can free me, the sin of betraying my Master for a price.

XII

CAIAPHAS, THE HIGH PRIEST WITH A PREJUDICE

"And they led Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.

"Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

"Then the high priest (Annas) asked Jesus of His disciples and His doctrine.

"Now Annas had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas, the high priest. And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, 'Answerest thou nothing? What is it that these witness against thee?' But He held His peace and answered nothing.

"Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, 'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?'

"And Jesus said 'I am, and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.'

"Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, 'What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?'

"And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death."

XII

CAIAPHAS, THE HIGH PRIEST WITH A PREJUDICE

WHILE Israel was encamped at Mount Sinai, on the way from Egypt to the Land of Canaan, God gave to Moses, and through him to Israel, command and direction for the building of a Tabernacle; detailed instruction in the service that should be conducted; ordered feasts and sacrifices; and the setting apart of the tribe of Levi, instead of the firstborn sons, for the priestly service in and about the Temple; and the consecration of Aaron as High Priest. The duties, the equipment, and the place of service were made plain, so that there could be no mistake or confusion.

Courses, twenty-four in number, were arranged, so that every Levite would serve his portion of time in the Temple every year.

The Tabernacle area, and later that of the Temple, was divided into three sections: The Outer Court, where stood the laver and the Altar of Sacrifice; the Holy Place, in which were placed the Altar of Incense, the Table of Shewbread, and the Golden Candlestick; and the Holy of Holies, in which stood the Ark of the Covenant, within which were the tables of stone, Aaron's rod that budded, and the pot of manna. Above this stood, as guard, the Cherubim, and beneath their touching, outspread wings, and above the Mercy Seat,

the cover of the Ark, shone the Shekinah, the light that typified the very presence of God in the midst of the camp.

The Levite, other than the priest, ministered at the Altar of Sacrifice in the Outer Court, assisting in the preparation of the sacrifices; but he never stood or served in the Holy Place. The priest might serve at the Altar of Sacrifice, but he could also stand in the Holy Place and minister before the Altar of Incense; farther than this, however, he could not go. He could neither go nor look within the veil that hung between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The High Priest did not serve in either Court or in the Holy Place, but in the Holy of Holies. Nor could he stand or serve here more often than once a year, entering in then only after the most rigid ritual of purification, and not without blood. Here, in the presence of Jehovah, symbolized by the light, he sprinkled the blood of the atonement and made confession of his own sins and the sins of the people, and then retired from this most hallowed spot for another twelve months. The penalty for entering oftener, or otherwise than God commanded, was death. Two of Aaron's own sons transgressed, and were instantly slain by a flash from the Shekinah. My nation, in her history, was guilty of many sins, was guilty many times, but through all her life this sin of presumption was never repeated.

In the days of her glory, the place of the High Priest, after Aaron's selection by Jehovah, descended from father to son; but there were times when this could not occur, and then the line was changed. For a number of years before my own incumbency the office

had been appointive, the appointee being named by the Roman Governor, and his term of office ended at the pleasure of this alien's wish or word. I received my appointment at the hands of Valerius Gratus. My immediate predecessor was Annas, whose daughter I had married, and who, deposed tho he had been by Rome, was still regarded with great favor by Israel. With Him I gladly divided the honors of the position.

Very readily you can appreciate the fact that the office was one which was coveted by all who were eligible, and yet the requirements were so exacting that one trembled at the thought of his responsibilies.

To preside at the meetings of the Sanhedrin, which were held daily, was not so trying, for there was not often very much of importance brought before us. But as the Day of Atonement approached, with its exacting details of preparation; with its deep spiritual significance; with its terrible punishment for lack of proper preparation and equipment; with the thought of actually standing in the immediate presence of Jehovah, I confess that I was oppressed with a very great fear, which for days prevailed in such measure as to make food unpalatable and sleep almost impossible.

The nation was divided into two main groups, religiously, and, I might say, politically—the Scribes and the Pharisees—the division being based upon the difference of opinion on the question of a future life. The Pharisees held firmly to the belief that there was a life after this one, while the Sadducees denied strenuously any such continuance of existence. There were other differences, but these were of minor importance.

I belonged to the Sadducean party, and this fact, no doubt, influenced largely my understanding of the Scriptures and my interpretation of them, as well as my conception of life itself.

We were regarded as more or less pessimistic, cold, and even cruel in our relations with those about us.

I had been in office about four years, when word came to us that the region about the Sea of Galilee, in the neighborhood of Bethabara, was greatly stirred by the preaching of one who was thought by many to be a mighty prophet. It came to us that He was declaring boldly that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand; that the coming of the Messiah, the Restorer, was an event of the immediate future.

We had been in such continuous trouble with Rome, because of the insulting disregard of our customs by Pilate; there had been so many serious outbreaks, resulting in the slaying of many of our people; complaint had been made to Rome, and our protests had been recognized so grudgingly, that I feared lest Rome should rush her armies into our beloved land, possibly deport us, and devastate our country, so as to make its restoration impossible; and so scatter us as to make return and reestablishment unthinkable.

So, after conference with the Sanhedrin, before whom I magnified the danger, we sent a deputation to John the Baptist—for we were informed that this was his name—asking him who he was, and what his purpose or plan, and by whose authority he was thus speaking. When our representatives met with him, they asked him our questions: "Art thou the Christ? . . . Art thou Elias? . . . Art thou that Prophet?" To all

of which he answered, "No." Puzzled, they said to him: "Who art thou then, if you are none of these, that we may take back a reply to those who sent us to you?" To this he replied: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord." Then they asked him: "Why do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elias, or that Prophet?" And he answered them strangely: "I baptize you with water, but there standeth One among you, whom ye know not. He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me; whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

After remaining a few days to inquire further and to listen to his preaching, they returned to us and made their report. They had been greatly impressed with the sincerity and the earnestness of John, and they also stated that the people were one in regarding him as a great prophet, and his message as one distinctly referring to the coming of the Messiah.

We were greatly relieved to learn that he was not advocating immediate revolution against Rome, and, after considering his message, we decided that he might be God's herald of the Messiah, whom he had declared to be unrecognized, but already among us. Who could this one be?

We determined to wait and to watch. It may not be amiss to pause here for a moment and consider our conception of the Messiah of God. We had no place in our expectations for "a light to lighten the Gentiles." The only place for the Gentile dogs was to contribute continuously, to the utmost of their ability, to the glory, the grandeur, and the greatness of Israel.

We were not looking for a priest, but for a king, a deliverer from Rome. We had no conception of a divine-human personality, but of one far above the ordinary human—royal, prophetic, angelic. His kingdom was to be higher than any other, and was destined to subdue them all. All the marvels of Moses were to be magnified in him. Glory and majesty were to be found in his appearance; confidence and tranquillity in his words. No one answering these expectations, based on our prophecies, had appeared as yet.

We did not have long to wait. Almost at once, reports came to us of the appearance of another, Jesus of Nazareth, and of miracles performed—miracles of such proportions and in such numbers as to astonish. Too, there drifted in reports, such as were made of John the Baptist, of this man's words, and the people's reception of them, of Him, and of His doctrines. We learned that they were declaring that this One was the One to whom John referred as "The Unrecognized," and others stated that John had actually declared Him to be the Messiah.

We decided to do nothing for the present, learning that He was surely coming to Jerusalem at the time of the feast, not far removed.

For the convenience of the visitors who were coming from distant parts of our country at the times of our great feasts, we had arranged to provide sacrifices—pigeons, lambs, etc.—of the required nature, which could be bought for a moderate price. Roman coins could circulate, if they must, in the places of trade; but the Temple tax must be paid in the Jewish shekel. Again, for the convenience of our race, we

had arranged for the exchange, for a small charge, of this Roman currency into Jewish currency. The profits were greater than we had anticipated, and competition for these privileges became very keen. Offers of a share in these profits were made to the priests for places of vantage from which to vend these necessities, and, all unnoticed, these merchantmen were found to be encroaching upon the Temple territory. At first I remonstrated, and drove them out, but they were persistent, and—very generous, so we said nothing more about it.

The feast was at hand. As we expected, this newcomer, of whom we had heard, came to the feast, accompanied by a number of men who called themselves His disciples. He bore Himself in a dignified way until He approached the Temple area, in which, as I have said, this traffic was going on. Then He did the most unexpected and outrageous thing. He made a small scourge of cords, and, with this in his hand, He entered this area and overturned the tables of the money-changers, striking all the while to the right and left with the scourge; upset the cages of those who sold doves, and commanded those who sold lambs or other required beasts to drive them out at once; and then, before them all, in our presence, condemned us, saying: "It is written, 'My Father's house is an house of prayer,' but ye have made it a den of thieves and a place of merchandise." This was very humiliating, and was the beginning of our opposition to Him.

Immediately, we appointed a deputation to visit Him, and to demand of Him a show of authority for His actions and for His words. His reply was something about "destroying the temple and He would re-

build it in three days." But such words were very foolish, in view of the fact that forty-seven years had been consumed in building the beautiful Temple, and then I discovered that, in spite of His high-handed usurping of an authority which belonged to us, the sentiment prevailed with very many that He, Jesus, from the little, disreputable town of Nazareth, from which town no good thing had ever come or could ever come, was the Christ of God, the Messiah.

I assembled the Sanhedrin, and there was immediately issued the decree that if any one should confess that this Jesus was the Christ of God, the long expected Messiah, he would be at once cast out of the synagog. I felt certain that this drastic penalty, with its terrible consequences, would check any enthusiasm that might be felt for Jesus of Nazareth.

Another reason for this action on the part of the Sanhedrin was His flagrant disregard for the Law, especially the law of the Sabbath. Repeatedly He healed on the Sabbath, even in the synagogs, and he not only sanctioned but directed the bearing of burdens on this holy day. A third reason for opposition to Him was His open assumption of authority to interpret God's will to the people. Again and again He held up our interpretations, and the interpretations of our fathers, to ridicule, or treated them with contempt. "It hath been said," He would begin, and then quote one of our most revered laws, and add, "But I say unto you," following with an opposite command or comment.

His oft-shown contempt for us was very trying and provoking. "Blind leaders of the blind," He called us.

"Scribes, Pharisees, *hypocrites*" He named those with whom authority rested. All these things tended to bitterness on our part, a bitterness that was justified.

Personally, I resented all that He said or did, but I counseled restraint, feeling sure that one who showed such contempt for the Law and constituted authority in religion, would sooner or later reveal the same contempt for civil law and civil authority; and I knew that Rome would show Him no consideration. His teaching was done, and His miracles were wrought, for the main part, in the region near Capernaum, in Galilee; but we were not a little disturbed that our warning against confessing Him as Christ was so little heeded, and its penalty so little feared; for the crowds that acclaimed Him increased as the months went by.

In the seventh year of my term of office we reached a decision in regard to Him.

In the little village of Bethany lived the family of Simon, whose three children were frequently hosts to Jesus and His disciples. The son, Lazarus, died in the absence of Jesus from the village; but Jesus was sent for, and returned, and witnesses reported that, in response to his command, "Come forth," he who had been dead came out of the grave and was restored to his family. Of this miracle there could be no denial, and so enthusiasm for Him increased amazingly.

Again, fear of Rome's action worried the Sanhedrists. They feared invasion and destruction more than they were willing to admit. But I arose and outlined the plan which had been taking form in my mind for months, but which events of the last few days had crystallized. "Ye know nothing at all," I cried. "It is

fitting that one should die for the people rather than that the whole nation should perish." There was a tradition extant that the High Priest, during his term of office, was endowed with the gift of prophecy; and these words of mine, because they were afterward fulfilled, were looked upon as prophetic.

There was no misunderstanding. I had made myself perfectly clear; none present missed my meaning, nor did any one express disapproval of my plan. It was this: Rome must be assured of our loyalty. This One must be destroyed under the pretext of patriotism. We must deliver and destroy Him. No longer could His insolence be tolerated, nor could we allow our prestige, our place or power, to be jeopardized.

Our task was not easy. We Sadducees had no love for either the Pharisees or the Herodians, nor had they any kindly feeling for us; but a common object sometimes unites antagonists of the most pronounced types. They wished to see Him destroyed, as did we. So, all the keenness of intellect of the three groups was combined in plans for His overthrow in the manner most certain to accomplish our purpose. We could have gotten rid of Him in hidden, secret ways; but Rome must be convinced, and the finding of His dead body at the foot of a cliff, or bruised and beaten by the roadway, was far from such proof as we desired to give of our loyalty to her hated government. No, He must be legally put to death, by Rome, in Rome's way, upon our demand, with our charge of revolution proven beyond a doubt.

No, our task was not an easy one. Never had we matched our wits against an intellect so quick to

sense danger and to avoid the hidden snare. Again and against our plans seemed to be perfect, flawless, impossible of defeat, but with the most astonishing ease He would escape us and leave us deeply chagrined.

The time of the great feast drew near. Nothing had been heard of Him for weeks. Again the Sanhedrin met and, at my suggestion, ordered that if any one knew where He might be hiding, he should inform us at once, that we might take Him. I felt sure, however, that He would attend the feast. Our plans were fixed. At this time of great national fervor He must be taken and destroyed, but an open outbreak must be avoided at all cost. The people must either be persuaded by us of his dangerous nature, or He must be seized and condemned and destroyed before the people could realize what had been done. This last method seemed more certain of success, and I planned accordingly.

We were not mistaken. He came to the feast a full week beforehand. He played directly into our hands, altho we did not think so at the time.

We knew our danger. Pilate had come down from Cæsarea to prevent or control any outbreak. We were aware that the fortress was crowded with soldiers, whose hatred for us we had learned at terrible cost. We knew full well Pilate's contempt for us, and were sure that he would not hesitate to hurl his legions against us, and upon us, upon the slightest pretext. When Jesus and the excited multitudes were approaching the city on the Sabbath before the feast—in fact, until they had swept past us into the streets of the

city—we tried to stop them before Pilate's suspicion or anger could be aroused; but to no purpose. Fortunately for us, Pilate was unusually passive, and the day of our great danger was passed without a massacre. This escape only served to fix more firmly our determination to end it all at this time.

We talked of bribing some one; but who, among His followers, would accept or consider a bribe to deliver Him into our hands? How were we to obtain possession of Him? The answer came in Judas, one of his followers.

We were not strangers to this young man of Kerioth. He had often been seen by us in our meeting-place, and he always impressed us as a very earnest young man. We had missed him for some time, and then we heard that he had gone to the North to hear this great new teacher. And then we were told that he had become a follower of Him. It was true. When Jesus entered the city, Judas was in the forefront, as wildly enthusiastic as the rest. Imagine our surprize, then, to find him in the meeting-place of the Sanhedrin, in Jerusalem, only a day or two after his frantic declaration of discipleship. We were at first suspicious, but his action and his general appearance led us to believe that he was there for some other purpose.

I moved slowly until I was close to him, and then, in tones that were low but loud enough for him to hear, I spoke of our willingness to pay a price for the betrayal of Jesus into our hands. So suddenly that we were startled, he was on his feet by our side, asking, yes, demanding, what we would pay for this favor.

I named the first sum that came to my mind—thirty pieces of silver—not thinking it possible to accomplish our desire at so small a price. I thought that he would insist upon more, and keep on raising his price until we would be forced to pay an enormous sum; but to our amazement and great joy, he agreed at once. The arrangements were made quickly, and he left us with the assurance that we could go ahead and complete our arrangements, for he would not fail us.

We immediately set our agents at work; soldiers were arranged for; the Sanhedrin was called in special, tho unlawful, session, and we simply marked time until the day of our triumph should come.

At last it came. The day before the feast, Judas came and laid before us his plan, setting that night for the delivery of his Master into our hands. We were anxious for the night to fall. Every member of the Sanhedrin was in his seat. The situation was tense. The money had been paid. We had done our part. Would Judas relent, or carry his part through? . . . At last we heard loud cries, and then we saw soldiers approaching, and in the center of the group was the One for whom we were waiting. Yes, they had secured Him, and, bound with cords, He was brought before us.

The strain that had held us all, gave place to a feeling of great relief; but we could not delay. He was quickly sent to Annas, with whom, as I have already said, I shared the honors of the office of High Priest; and Annas quickly returned Him to us for judgment. At last He stood before me, and I was under no obligation to endure any of His contempt or insults. I

was in the place of power, and I did not propose in the slightest degree to resign my advantage of position until I had finished my task to my complete satisfaction.

Witnesses, who were supposed to have been carefully coached in their testimony, were produced and heard. This proved to be a harrowing experience to us, for, that these men had been poorly coached was patent to all; they bungled terribly, contradicting each other hopelessly. I saw that something else must be done, so, rising from my seat, I cried: "I adjure thee by the living God: tell us whether or no thou art the Christ." Every one was leaning forward to hear His answer, and when it came, "Yes, I am the Christ, the Son of the Living God," the outcry from the Sanhedrin was such as I had never heard before. Member after member was trying to make himself heard by me, but there was just one cry, "The cross! He is guilty of blasphemy! The cross!" As quickly as possible the formal vote was taken and we started for Pilate's court, where, we knew, ready assent to our judgment awaited us.

But, we had counted upon too easy a victory. We had thought that our assertion that this One was a traitor to Rome would be enough; but it was far short of what that hateful Roman demanded. We were kept for more than an hour in the greatest suspense, while Pilate came out to us, and then went into the judgment hall, where he had taken Jesus, and where we would not think of going so close to the day of the feast. We were hopeful, but fearful. We were driven nearly mad, however, when at last Pilate ap-

peared and declared that he found no fault in Him and would let Him go. We screamed that He was a dangerous man to be left at liberty, a dangerous propagandist against Rome; that He had claimed to be a king, and that this was open rebellion; that He had demonstrated His power as a leader of Rome's enemies less than a week ago. Again Pilate retired and we were left in a suspense that was terrible to endure. He had no right to do as he was doing. It was just another way that he had chosen to humiliate us before this great gathering of our race from all parts of our land. We simply must not fail. Again Pilate was approaching us. We waited for his words breathlessly. We trembled as we heard him say, "I find Him innocent; I will chastise Him, and let Him go." I felt that the crisis had been reached, and I led the throng in the cry of "The cross! The cross!"

But why go on? At last Pilate turned to the waiting soldiers and cried, "Make ready the cross!" We had won. Without the loss of a moment, we started for the knoll outside the city where such executions were usually held, and there we saw Him nailed to the cross and left to die.

Oh, believe me when I tell you that never was a Passover Feast eaten by me with greater joy than this one, nor was ever any expression of gratitude to God more fervent than mine was now; for we were saved. His claims to Messiahship were ended, and we would have no more trouble in combating them.

I remembered the answer that this One had given when we demanded his authority for the first cleansing of the Temple. "Destroy this temple, and in three days

I will raise it again," He had said. I determined that His followers should attempt no trickery. He had intimated that He would rise from the dead on the third day. No ruse, no hoax, could be permitted at this time. So, going to Pilate, I said to him: "This deceiver, while He was alive, said that He would rise from the dead; I want a guard stationed at the tomb, and I want the tomb sealed with the Roman seal until after the passing of the third day from to-day." Pilate granted me both the soldiers and the seal, and I went to my home well satisfied that I had forestalled every attempt that might be made to deceive the people; and I was sure that, when the third day should have passed, and the tomb should have been opened, His body would be found behind the stone door.

The third day came. We feared nothing, because we Sadducees denied that there was a resurrection from the dead or a life other than this one that we were living. After the third day had come and gone, the guard could be removed, because the resurrection must come before the fourth day to make His claims effective; but there would be no danger of that, we were certain.

Very early in the morning, I was disturbed by an insistent knocking on my door. I opened it, and there stood before me a Roman soldier, the most terrified person that I had ever seen. I could not imagine what he could want with me at this early hour. But when he could gather breath to speak, he gasped, "The grave! The grave in the Garden! Open! Angels! The dead alive!" and he staggered away.

I was dumfounded. This was startling and dan-

gerous. Almost at once members of the Sanhedrin, forgetting their dignity, came running to my home; for they, too, had heard what I had been told. Something must be done to counteract these stories, which every one would believe who could see the abject terror on the faces of the soldiers.

Hurriedly I dispatched a messenger to the fortress and asked that these men be sent to me at once. They came, and a more terror-stricken company I had never seen. They told us the story complete, of the earth quaking, the rolling back of the stone without touch of human hands, and then the sudden lighting of the dark recesses of the tomb and the coming out through its entrance, of the One whom they had nailed to the cross three days before. There could be no mistake, for they had seen the wounds of the cross. We tried to laugh away their fears, but it was useless, so finally we gave them large sums of money and told them to spread abroad the story that while they had slept His disciples had come and stolen His body, and had then told of His having risen. It took a good deal of persuasion, for they were not ignorant of the penalty that Rome would make them pay for sleeping while on duty; but we had been so successful with Pilate already that we assured them that if this story should come to Pilate's ears, we would see to it that they were protected. They went away, and this story came to us later. They had done as we had asked.

All day long, however, the other story that they had told was brought to us—that the grave was empty —that He had appeared to a number of persons throughout the day. These things I denied, but I could

not prove them untrue. I could not satisfy myself that the fear which I had seen written on the soldier's face had been caused by anything else than what he had described so vividly. They had not been asleep.

The one marked result of this so-called resurrection, and the consequent appearances of Jesus, was the enthusiasm and the absolute fearlessness of the disciples of this Man. For days this continued, and we could not in any way check it. We were sore pressed.

Then came the day of another of our feasts, the Feast of Pentecost. A most unusual incident occurred early in the first day of this feast. The city was crowded, as usual, when a strange noise was heard, as of a rushing wind; not over all parts of the city, as in a storm, but a noise centering in a spot near the heart of the city, yet heard in every part. It was like the noise of the whirring of many wings, and it drew a great throng to this focal point. In the midst of the multitude stood about one hundred men and women who had been close followers of Jesus. All were talking in tongues that were unknown to me; but, as was always true of these feasts, many of other nationalities, proselyted by members of our race, were present. As the multitude listened to the speakers, we saw the faces of the people light up with every indication of great delight. We asked what it meant, and the strangers replied that they had heard a message, each in the language of his own nation, from the lips of these Galilean fishermen.

I was amazed, and wondered what the end of this would be. Then a man named Peter, one of the company, spoke, while the others remained silent. We

had declared them drunken, but Peter denied that this was the result of intoxication; he stated that it was the fulfilling, by Jehovah, of a prophecy of Joel, who had declared that the time would come when the Spirit of God would be poured out upon all men, and that our children should prophesy and speak with unknown tongues the glorious messages of God to all nations. And the people believed what they were told by him.

We decided to punish the disciples, and thus stop their continuous spreading of this pernicious doctrine; but persecution did not stop them. They gloried in suffering for their faith. When brought before us to be judged—before me, the High Priest—they boldly charged us with the awful sin of crucifying the Christ, the Son of God. We forbade them to speak further in this name, but they told us very plainly that they would not obey us. Finally, Gamaliel arose and gave us advice which we followed, saying to us: "Let them alone; if this work be of men, it will soon fall of its own weight; but if it be of God, we can do nothing against it, and we should be making a great mistake to be guilty of fighting against God." We decided that he was right, so we dismissed them with the useless charge that they cease their witness-bearing.

You ask me if I, as High Priest, was sincere and honest in my rejection of the claims of Jesus to be the Christ of God. I will answer your question indirectly—by asking you another question.

Do you believe that I was utterly ignorant of, and incapable of understanding, the prophecies of our Scriptures which you now revere as we once did?

Do you think that I did not give great weight to the

words of John the Baptist, the greatest of all our prophets?

Do you wish to do me the great injustice of believing me so blind and so ignorant as to be unable to recognize the marks of identification which were so clearly stamped upon Jesus?

There were many who believed in secret, some even in the Sanhedrin, as we discovered on the day that He was nailed to the cross.

I had not forgotten the story told by the shepherds. I had not forgotten the strange visit of the wise men from the Far East, and their perplexing question, "Where is He who is born King of the Jews?" That was only thirty-three years before this. I knew that Jesus' residence was in Nazareth, but that it began years after his birth and not coincident with it; that He was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

Do you ask me if I were sincere? Just as much so as I was—and no more—in my protestations of loyalty to Rome when, a few hours before His crucifixion, I led that crowd in, crying "We have no king but Cæsar." Just as sincere as I was—and no more—when a moment before I had led the throng in its choice of Barabbas, guilty of insurrection against Rome, as our Passover boon. You do me a wrong. I hated Rome. Why? Because my power and position were threatened by her, and, like many another man who had gone before me, and like many another who has followed me, I was jealous of my place and power, which I knew I must give up or lose if I let my heart speak out its deep conviction; if I let the door swing wide open to the entrance of the Christ; if I per-

mitted Him to cleanse it, occupy it, and rule it as I knew He would.

As many a man in my day, and in your day, I loved the praise of men—because it was tangible—more than the approval of God, which is not always so. I determined to retain the praise of men; and the denial and destruction of the Christ was a necessary part of that choice.

But I did not destroy. Instead, I lost all that I had hoped to retain. Pilate, before whom we stood, and from whom we wrested the sentence of crucifixion, was soon afterward deposed, and in the same year I was dismissed by order of Vitellius. I received very little for so great a price. The praise of men is evanescent—a very poor exchange for the unchanging favor of the Changeless Christ.

I said a moment ago that I did not destroy the Christ. I did not even destroy men's faith in Him. The High Priest was credited with the gift of prophecy. Let me venture one last prediction. You may live to see its fulfilment: *"Nothing will ever again so much as threaten the absolute supremacy of Jesus Christ. More and more completely will He dominate the hearts of men, until that spiritual kingdom, of which the prophets of my people, and He Himself, so clearly spoke, shall conquer with the weapons of peace and love, and supplant every earthly kingdom; and He shall receive the recognition and the homage of every earthly ruler, who will, with great rejoicing, lay at His feet his scepter and his crown."*

XIII

PILATE, THE MAN WHOSE HANDS WOULD NOT COME CLEAN

"Pilate saith unto them, 'What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?' They all said unto him, 'Let Him be crucified.'

"And the Governor said, 'Why, what evil hath he done?' But they cried out the more, 'Let Him be crucified.'

"When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it.'

"Then answered all the people, and said, 'His blood be on us and on our children.'

"Then released he Barabbas unto them, and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified."

XIII

PILATE, THE MAN WHOSE HANDS WOULD NOT COME CLEAN

I AM a Roman citizen, a member of the order of "Equites" or "Knights." In the twelfth year of Tiberius Cæsar, owing to the influence of Sejanus, my friend, I received from the Emperor my appointment as Procurator of Judea, being the sixth in line.

From the moment of assuming control, with my residence in Cæsarea Philippi, I conceived a strong dislike for the people whom I was to govern. They, as early, manifested an unfriendly attitude toward me.

Soon after taking my place as Procurator, I decided to remove my headquarters, and the headquarters of the army, from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. My soldiers would naturally take with them the Silver Eagles, bearing the image of the Emperor, and other insignia of the legion. I saw no possible wrong or occasion of offense in this, but for five days and nights these Jews prostrated themselves on the bare ground about my home, and all but stormed my residence with tumultuous threats and entreaties; and even when, on the sixth day, I had them surrounded by soldiers, they would not withdraw, and I was compelled to alter my plans.

This gave me some conception of the character of the people with whom I had to deal, and I confess

that I never forgave them for this my first humiliation at their hands.

A second expression of their fanaticism came when, in attempting to bring into the city of Jerusalem an adequate and improved water supply from the pools of Solomon, I decided to use in the construction of the aqueduct some of the money in the fund called by them "Corban" or "Sacred Treasury." My action was made the occasion for the most bitter denunciation, insults and reproaches, until I became furious, and, disguising my soldiers as Jews, I sent them among the crowds with orders to punish the leaders. The multitude refused to go to their homes when commanded to do so, and, at a signal agreed upon, the soldiers attacked them with daggers which they had concealed upon them, and with clubs, so that many were put to death by wounds or by being trampled upon by the stampeded mob.

Not long after this another outbreak occurred. In the Herodian palace at Jerusalem, I had hung some shields which had been dedicated to the Emperor Tiberius. They were perfectly plain, decorated only with a simple votive inscription. But the Jews made complaint to the Emperor himself, with the result that he ordered them removed and taken back to Cæsarea, and I was reprimanded by him. This made our breach impossible of bridging, and throughout the remainder of my official life, the strife was almost endless, each of us attempting to outdo the other in the manifestation of contempt and hatred.

It was customary for the Procurator to journey to Jerusalem at the time of the feasts, as a measure of

precaution against popular outbreaks. At such times my residence was at Herod's palace.

Rome, as a conquering nation, permitted a large measure of autonomy in the subdued regions. But she insisted upon acknowledgment of her sovereignty through the payment of taxes and the mintage of coins, and through the withdrawal of the right to enforce the death penalty. But in this particular instance she respected the religious convictions of the Jews, and their prejudices, to the extent that on money coined for use in my province there appeared no effigy of a god or of the Emperor. Of course, coins bearing these imprints, in the natural course of barter and exchange, did enter in and circulate; but not at Rome's order.

The religion of the land was not interfered with in any way, nor were decisions of her courts from the local to the Sanhedrin interfered with so long as they did not clash with Roman law and precedent.

I governed this people for about ten years, and my hatred for them grew from year to year. I think it was during the early part of the sixteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, the fourth of mine in Judea, that I began to hear more or less frequently of the appearance of, and the great enthusiasm among the Jews for the words of one named Jesus, from the village of Nazareth. Great crowds were always in attendance upon Him, and I thought it best to investigate. Capernaum, it seemed, was His headquarters. I sent several of my most trustworthy officers to observe and report. Their judgment was, that what He said was altogether in reference to religion, and that while He was certainly possessed of a power to heal diseases of

different kinds, no attempt was made by Him to use this power to Rome's injury. So I determined not to interfere, and dismissed the matter from my consideration, enjoining care, however, and an immediate report to me, if there should be observed any change in His conduct or in His teaching which might prove prejudicial to Rome's interests. But no such change was ever reported to me.

At the time of the great national feasts of the Jews, we were always very watchful; for with a people so saturated with the love of liberty as these Jews were, no guaranty against an outbreak of greater or less violence, at any time, could be made; but when their devotion to their religion was at white heat, as it always was at feast time, there was need for great caution lest Rome be taken off guard. No outbreak occurred, however, and I was truly glad of it.

For some years preceding the time of my appointment as Procurator, the High Priest of the Jews had been one Joseph Caiaphas, appointed to office by Valerius Gratus. He was a shrewd politician, one whom I early suspected of only a pretended friendship for Rome. He was the one, I was sure, who had inspired and encouraged his people in those early disputes, which I have already described as nearly causing my removal from office by the Emperor.

I, as a Roman, with my own gods to revere, cared nothing for him or for his God; but he presented no evidence or argument to me that would lead me to judge either his religion or his God superior to Rome and her deities. He was haughty, crafty, scheming, and not to be trusted very far, if at all.

In the seventh year of my rule, I made the journey from Cæsarea to Jerusalem to be present at the time of the Jews' greatest feast, which they called the Feast of the Passover; it commemorated, I was told, their deliverance from bondage to Egypt and their first experiment in self-government. I was more fearful and watchful at this time than at any of the other feasts, because they became almost hysterical in their patriotic zeal. My soldiers were massed in the fortress not far away from the Temple, and with direct and easy approach, armed for service at a moment's notice. Here we passed the days of the feast.

On the fifth day before the feast occurred, I thought that what I had always feared was about to occur. Very early in the morning the city was astir. It was their Sabbath. The city was crowded with worshipers who had come from all parts of the land to celebrate the feast. Not long after daybreak, a great throng was seen, by my soldiers, approaching the city from the direction of Bethany. While it was orderly, yet it was an excited, fanatical company that might cause great trouble. The soldiers were ready for any emergency. The crowd swept down into the valley, and then up toward the gates of the city. Before they entered the city proper, another company, as great and as excited as the one from Bethany, went out of the city and met the one approaching, and, turning about, pressed toward and through the gates into the city. In the forefront rode a man who, I was told, was this Jesus of Nazareth, of whom I had heard months before. Nothing calling for interference occurred at this hour, nor during the day; when evening came I

was glad to note that the city had become calm. The days remaining until the feast, indeed, marked no further outburst or outbreak. It was reported to me that this Rabbi, Jesus, had returned to Bethany and was in apparent retreat. I remained watchful, but felt myself under much less of a strain.

Imagine my surprize, therefore, when just after sunrise, on the day before the festival, I saw approaching over the lofty bridge that spanned the Valley of Tyropean, the High Priest, Caiaphas, himself leading a prisoner by a cord tied around the man's neck. He was accompanied by a great crowd, who were shouting vigorously, but were held in check in their attempts to reach the prisoner, by a guard of Roman soldiers. They turned toward my palace and were soon at my door, uttering constantly their wild cries. Here they paused. I am what the Jews call, in contempt, a Gentile, and from my years of residence among them I knew what they thought—to come in contact with me, or even to enter my house, so short a time before the feast, would make them unclean and unfit to eat the feast.

I felt intense anger as I responded to their summons to meet them outside, but I met them on the pavement of the open court.

There I saw something which I can never forget. Just behind the priest stood the prisoner. It was He who had ridden before that excited mob a few days before. But how changed! They had bound him. His face showed bruises, where He had been struck by cruel blows. Not one in the throng appeared to be His friend. And the hatred depicted in the faces of those

who stood a little farther back, and even in the face of Caiaphas, was the most terrible that I had ever seen. I glanced from the prisoner to Caiaphas, and from him to the crowd about him, with many of whose faces I had become familiar; for many of them were of the priestly order. I waited for the request or the demand which I knew they disliked to make, but which they must make. They hated to make it because it was a confession of their subjugation to Rome, and the necessity of acknowledging Rome's mastery. Soon it came:

"This man, according to our law, is deserving of death, and has been sentenced to death by the Sanhedrin. Grant thine approval."

They were already turning away, as tho my consent had been given, when I determined upon my course. I replied:

"Why send Him to the cross? What evil hath He done that merits death?"

They turned upon me amazed, and speechless with rage. My question had caught them unprepared, and Caiaphas, foreseeing that I had determined upon a judicial investigation, played for time to meet the situation, by declaring insolently:

"If he were not a malefactor worthy of death, we would not have brought Him into your court; we would not have troubled Rome with the consideration of our affairs; we would have judged Him and punished Him according to our own law, which is ample for all cases, even for this."

His insult to me and to Rome stung me as tho I had been cut by a lash. I turned as tho to reenter my

palace, saying to him with no little measure of satisfaction:

"Take Him, and judge him, and punish him according to your law; but if death ensues from your punishment, know this, that Rome will call you to account for rebellion against her authority in taking life without her permission, a thing not allowed to her conquered peoples."

I, too, had scored. His face blanched and then flamed with anger. What I had said about his rebellion possibly furnished the suggestion for which he had been madly searching, for he cried out instantly, making a threefold charge, each item of which implied treason to Rome:

"He hath perverted the nation. . . . He forbiddeth the paying of tribute to Rome. . . . He maketh Himself a king."

For the first charge I cared nothing, since the whole nation hated Rome, and Rome knew it. The second charge was a mere pretext, for I knew that Caiaphas himself had again and again protested against the paying of taxes to Rome. But to the third charge, "He maketh himself a king," I felt that attention must be given.

I led the prisoner into the judgment hall. I asked Him who He was, and whence He came, and of His doctrine, and of His followers. I was greatly interested in Him, and asked Him concerning this charge. I asked him if He were King of the Jews, or if He claimed to be a king at all. To my surprize, He answered me by asking me whether I was speaking this for myself, or if some one else had prompted the

inquiry. He was like the rest of His race, after all. I was angry and cried out:

"What do you mean by speaking thus to me. Do not mistake me for one of your despised Jews. Your beloved nation, through your own chief priests, has brought you to me. What have you done to receive this condemnation?"

He answered me, and when He spoke there was such gentleness in His voice that I regretted having spoken to Him as I did.

"Yes," he said; "yes, I am a king. But my kingdom is not of this world. If it were, then would my soldiers fight in my defense. I am come to bear witness unto the truth, and whosoever knoweth and loveth the truth becomes a subject in my kingdom, the Kingdom of Truth."

I was inclined to smile at such dreaming, but I checked myself for the moment, asking, *"What is Truth?"*

And then I felt as I had often felt when I stood before my Emperor. I felt that I was indeed a subject, and that He was truly a king, greater even than Cæsar, tho He stood before me bound with thongs. He talked with me as I had never heard another speak. I could see clearly the battlements of His kingdom. I could envision His conquering legions. I could see Him on His throne, crowned King of Kings. And when He had finished his answer to my question, "What is Truth?" I knew that Caiaphas had lied to me when he had made his charges, and that he knew he had lied.

I left the accused; went out into the court, and silence like death gripped the mob. I cried out:

"I find in him no fault at all. . . . He is guiltless of the charges you have brought against him. I will chastise him and let him go."

In the moments that I had been inside, Caiaphas and his companions evidently had not been idle. No sooner had my words been spoken, than the multitude cried out, making many other charges; but one was heard in which Galilee was mentioned. Herod, ruler of Galilee, was in the city. This was my opportunity to be rid of the whole affair. So I said:

"If the offense was committed in Galilee, it was committed in the jurisdiction of Herod. Take your prisoner to the proper judge; I have no jurisdiction."

They left me immediately, and I reentered my palace, glad to be free from it all. But my joy was short-lived, for soon they were back, and I heard their cries again at my door. Going out, I found a largely increased crowd facing me. I was informed by Caiaphas that Herod had returned the prisoner to me for my decision. Once more I retired with the prisoner; but why go on with this farcical performance? There was no sense or justice in it. I went out again, declaring Him innocent of any crime deserving death; but I added, "To warn both Him and you, I will scourge Him."

This did not satisfy them, and then the thought came to me to propose, not to Caiaphas nor to the priests, but to the multitude now gathered, that the Roman custom be followed—the custom of granting freedom to a prisoner of their own choosing, as a

Passover boon. So I proposed, as much to test the sincerity of the avowed loyalty to Rome as to give those who might so desire a chance to claim Jesus as their gift, the choice between two prisoners—Jesus, who was now before me, and Barabbas, who was known to be guilty of sedition and was under sentence of death for his folly. For a moment they seemed not to know what to do; then the priests became intensely active. I saw them moving swiftly among the crowd, and soon I heard the name of Barabbas uttered by a single voice. Then, louder and louder, until it became a mighty roar, "Not this man Jesus, but Barabbas!"

Shocked at this revelation of their duplicity, so clearly exhibited, I cried, "But what shall I do with Jesus, King of the Jews?"

Without a moment's hesitation, the cry came back, "The cross! The cross! The cross!" I cried out again: "Shall I crucify your King?" And with even greater volume than before came the unexpected declaration, "We have no King but Cæsar. . . . This man declares Himself to be a king. Whosoever maketh himself a king is not Cæsar's friend."

I saw that nothing I could do would turn them from their determination. I again went inside, called my soldiers, and commanded them to scourge the prisoner. This they did in the usual way. You are familiar with this form of punishment, but I am sure that with more zeal than usual the soldiers swung the terrible lash, because He was a Jew, and one who claimed to be of royal blood, a king. When they had administered the stripes, they clothed Him in a robe of purple cloth, crowned him with a crown of thorns which they had

twisted into shape, put in His hand a reed as a scepter, and then brought Him back to me. It was a sight that awakened pity in my own heart, and I felt sure that this would satisfy those outside, His accusers.

I led Him forth before them, just as he was received by me from the hands of His tormentors, and as He appeared I cried, "Behold the Man!" Just for a moment they let me think that I had gained my point; but only for a woment, for they cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him! He has claimed not only to be a king, but also to be God, and by our law He ought to die."

I was afraid when I heard this; for my wife, earlier in the day, had sent word to me to have nothing to do with this man; He was a just and righteous person, she said, adding that she had suffered many things in a dream because of Him. I took Him back into the hall and questioned Him, and once more I was convinced beyond all doubt of His guiltlessness. I went out again and announced my judgment—that He was innocent—but they would not yield, and cried out the more for the cross.

So I released unto them Barabbas, whom they had chosen; then, remembering an old custom of the Jews, of which I had been told, I took a basin of water and, before them all, washed my hands, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." In answer, they cried out: "His blood be upon us and upon our children." Hearing these words, which made even me, a Roman, shudder, I turned and called to my soldiers: "Make ready the cross"; and to the throng: "Take ye Him and crucify Him." I immediately with-

drew, knowing well that the mob would see to it that the soldiers obeyed my command to crucify.

I ought, perhaps, to have summoned my army and cleared the pavement of these hypocrites when first they appeared before me, or at least when I first declared Him innocent of wrong-doing; but I did not do so. I finally yielded because I was convinced that one more complaint, laid before Tiberius, would bring to an end my political career, and I knew that they would make complaint if I let Jesus go. What did Jesus mean to me, anyway? I had seen Him but once before He appeared as a prisoner. Why should I sacrifice myself for one who could in no way compensate me? I was glad that it was over. I had washed my hands of all responsibility, and they had assumed it willingly for themselves and for their children.

But not so easily as this could I rid myself of this one who claimed to be a king, with no visible kingdom —this one who did not deny that He was the Son of God.

I washed my hands in the presence of them all, but —my hands would not come clean. Again and again I looked at them—and they were blood-red. Again I would wash them, and would assure myself that I was in no way concerned with His death; and for a time the stain would not appear, but again it would return and make my hands as red as blood.

In less than three years after I had sent Jesus to the cross to satisfy His enemies and win their favor for myself, they made complaint against me. These hated Jews pushed their charges, and I was deposed from my office and set adrift by the Emperor.

My home was broken up by the death of my wife, Claudia Procula, and I became an aimless wanderer. I had cried to the soldiers, "Prepare the cross," and He whom I sent to the cross has offered me no comfort.

Let me acknowledge my mistake. I do it, not under any compulsion, except that of conscience, but I do it that you may not err as I did. I tried to take a neutral position in regard to Jesus, the prisoner, whom I believed to be but a Jew. To emphasize this, I washed my hands and declared myself free from all responsibility for His fate. But I was foolish in this, for I could not, nor can you, settle so easily the question which I asked so long ago, "What shall I do with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" He will not permit it, any more than He permitted water to free my hands from their crimson stains. Not so easily can you cast Him out of your lives.

Far better is it to render a just and righteous judgment concerning Him, who, I am now persuaded, was both a king and the Son of God, than to render a judgment that will never be recognized as righteous or final, and to try to escape responsibility for it by the futile washing of the hands. They will no more come clean with washing in water than will the heart come clean—the heart stained by sin—by washing in other than the blood-red stream that flowed down from the cross to which I bade my soldiers nail Him.

I have wandered far in these years since I experienced the displeasure of my Emperor, and in that wandering I have come at last, in a country other than my own, upon a mountain which by its ruggedness reminds me of my beloved Rome, and by its loneliness

speaks to me of my own solitary life. At its foot lies, mirror-like, a beautiful lake. Here I shall remain to the end; for in the sky-blue depths of this placid lake I may always find water to wash my hands, which now more often take on that crimson shade that condemns me for my great mistake—a mistake from which I can find no escape.

XIV

PHILIP, THE DISCIPLE WHO MADE OTHERS SEE JESUS

"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison.

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word.

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

"And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, 'Arise and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.'

"And he arose and went, and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning; and sitting in his chariot, read Esaias, the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, 'Go near, join thyself to this chariot.' And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said 'Understandest thou what thou readest?' And he said 'How can I except some man should guide me?' Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?' And Philip said 'If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest.' And he answered and said 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'"

XIV

PHILIP, THE DISCIPLE WHO MADE OTHERS SEE JESUS

MY father's house had been separated for generations from the one country dear to the heart of every Israelite. When Jerusalem fell under the attack and siege of the armies of Babylon, all who dwelt in Jerusalem were either destroyed or deported to Babylon, where they remained for seventy years, or until after Babylon, great kingdom that she was, had been conquered by the combined armies of the Medes and Persians under the command of Cyrus and Darius.

In the first year of the rule of Cyrus, permission was given to all of Israel who cared to do so, to return to the Land of Canaan; to rebuild the Temple, and to rehabilitate the land. About seventy thousand, in all, returned; but many did not take advantage of this opportunity, because in Babylon their lot had not been distressing. Since the overthrow of the Chaldeans —largely due to the influence of Daniel, the prophet of Jehovah—with both Cyrus and Darius, there was even less of oppression and more of real liberty; and, too, some shrank from the task which awaited those who would return.

Comparatively few remained of those who had entered Babylon seventy years before; but during all these years of captivity, those who had been in that sad company of captives had told of those last days in

our own land, when Nebuchadnezzar's army had made of Jerusalem a heap of ruins by burning the Temple and her gates with fire; by razing her beautiful buildings, and by leaving her a prey to marauding bands and to wild beasts by breaching her walls.

It was a depressing proposition, almost an impossible task; to many of the people, impoverished as they were, residence in Babylon seemed preferable. But an Israelite separated from his own beloved Canaan was like a plant or tree in inhospitable soil, and, after a time, the inherent longing for the homeland could not be repressed; so Babylon was forsaken, and Canaan became the goal.

Not by forced marches, but by very easy stages, the intervening miles were dissolved. Sometimes centuries were consumed; sometimes generations were required, but the direction was always the same, and the vision grew increasingly distinct.

Contact with many peoples superior to Israel in every branch of secular knowledge was enjoyed, and, unconsciously or with intent, much that was worthwhile in the arts, sciences, philosophy, refinement and culture was absorbed and became a permanent racial attribute.

Those who had gone direct to Jerusalem, and their children, had missed all this embellishment; and now they resented the very apparent intellectual superiority of the others. They called these late arrivals "Grecians" or "Hellenists" to distinguish them from the more conservative Galileans and Judeans. They rather resented the return to a rehabilitated land—to a rebuilt and rebeautified city—of these, and of the

children of these, who had declined to bear the burden in the heat of the day. While they could not deny them entrance to the land or to the city, or refuse them their heritage, for title to it was never voided, they both could and did make it very unpleasant for them by withholding social recognition, and religious privileges.

My parents and I had been of this belated company, and we suffered these indignities with many of our friends. No matter how old the real or imaginary injury, the wound never healed, and Israel never forgot the hurt. It is beyond all question true, that these who were opprobriously dubbed "Grecians" and "Hellenists" were much more ready to accept and to appreciate that which was of a high standard of merit than were those of our race who held us in contempt.

This fact may account for my great interest in and enthusiasm for the words of one Jesus of Nazareth, who came to Jerusalem at the times of the feasts. I confess that I held in very slight regard the puerile and very superficial discussions of ethical and religious problems by the Rabbis at Jerusalem. Such questions as "What constitutes a burden which one may or may not bear upon the Sabbath day?" or "What may or may not be considered a Sabbath day's journey?" were discussed at great length, and most solemn declarations were made defining to the smallest fraction of a shekel's weight, or of a step, the burden or the distance permissible; but this was usually followed by equally solemn declarations as to how these might be technically obeyed yet actually broken into a thousand fragments. Such teachings did not appeal to me at all; but from His very first discourse I was irresistibly at-

tracted to Jesus of Nazareth. There was in Him something so new, something so charming, something so stimulating, so satisfying, that I pushed through the crowd that always surrounded Him, and listened to Him most eagerly. For three years He came to the feasts. I watched for His coming, and often followed Him out of the city, remaining in the company of the disciples for several days at a time.

It was natural that those who had been held in high esteem for their learning and for their piety should resent this newcomer, who was working such havoc with their prestige. It hurt them deeply to hear the expressions of comparison or contrast in which their teaching was declared to be greatly inferior to His, because what He said had the ring of truth and sincerity and authority, which theirs so sadly lacked.

This jealousy of Him became more outspoken, and quickly developed into positive hatred. When it was about time for Him to appear in Jerusalem, there was very apparent an uneasiness and an irritation among the leaders of the nation.

I do not know when I first began to regard Him as other than a man of great learning and a teacher of impressive ability; but I found, mingling with this high esteem, a feeling close to reverence. Sometimes, as He spoke, I would feel as tho one of the old prophets of God was speaking to me. I would even forget His presence, and a deep sense of humility and unworthiness would overwhelm me as the conviction came upon me that I was in the very presence of God, the God of my fathers, and that He was speaking to my innermost soul.

When Jesus would cease speaking, I would feel myself floating down as from some lofty height to which I had been unconsciously lifted. My breathing would be almost suspended, and my heart would be beating as tho I had run a race. And when, one day, He stood and cried, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall have rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light," all at once the truth flashed full upon me. I was sure that God was speaking to me face to face, as He had spoken to Abraham, Isaac, Israel, to Moses and to the prophets. Somehow, the human form that stood before me dissolved and disappeared, and Jehovah, the mighty God, was there. I closed my eyes; the sight was too glorious to look upon. I felt as I had always imagined that the High Priest must feel when on the great Day of Atonement he stood in the Holy of Holies and saw above the Mercy Seat, and beneath the over-touching wings of the cherubim, the Shekinah, which ever glowed to express God's presence in our midst; light that would have slain him had it not been for the blood of the atonement which afforded him protection. Again and again I heard those words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I accepted His invitation; for I had long been very weary of my burden, the burden of the Law, as it was interpreted and enforced by those who claimed to stand to us for God, and I found rest and peace such as the Law could not give.

I found kindred spirits in Jerusalem, and consorted with them greatly to my profit.

And then that day came when the storm, long gathering, broke in all its raging fury; when they seized Him, hurried Him to the cross, and nailed Him to its cruel, rugged, outstretched arms. I saw the sun cover its face with black storm-clouds that it might not look upon His suffering. I felt the earth tremble beneath my feet as tho shuddering under the awful weight of the cross and Him who hung upon it. I felt the raindrops mingling with tears upon my upturned face as His cries came to me from the cross. But from somewhere in the gloom came words, His words, spoken long ere this, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up from the earth; and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

I have already told you that I had been strongly attracted to Him from the first time I had seen Him and heard Him; but I had not joined the group who, in spite of the Sanhedrin's edicts of excommunication, had accepted Him as the Christ of God. But I now felt an irresistible force, like strong arms encircling me and drawing me from where I stood, nearer and nearer to the cross. I knelt before it and Him, and with bowed head waited until they had taken down the body. When they bore it to the tomb, I followed and marked the place where they laid Him. I had seen so many times the group that was always with Him, that I felt that I knew those in it. They, too, had seen me so many times, close to them or with them, that my approach gave them no concern. In fact, they were so stricken with grief that it made little or no difference who might draw near.

When they left the tomb, I followed; for I could not do otherwise. I felt myself one of them. I entered the upper room and remained with them. I was still there on the first day of the week, the third after the crucifixion, when the startling word was brought by the women: that the tomb was empty, and that an angel had declared that He was *risen from the dead.* The excitement was intense. Not able to believe, two of the company, Peter and John, left the room to hurry to the sepulcher to learn the truth. Hours seemed to elapse before they came back, but it was really, only a few minutes before they returned with the word that the tomb was empty. Still confusion prevailed, but all day long gloom and doubt were giving place to clarity and certainty.

I was with them when night fell, and when He Himself stood in the midst and said, "Peace be unto you." Then it was that faith triumphed. The Lord had conquered death! The Christ had broken from His narrow prison cell! Jesus, our great leader, was with us again!

For the risen Christ I felt a new and holy affection, while from Him there seemed to radiate an attracting force that compelled us to draw near, not physically, but spiritually—to draw near and worship, and adore. I had no other wish now than to remain in this blessed company of the disciples. I had no fear of punishment for acknowledging my faith in Him as the Messiah. I wanted all to know that He had drawn me to Him, and into such a relationship with Him that nothing could ever alter my conviction or weaken my faith.

I remained with them until He was taken from them.

I tarried until the Day of Pentecost had come, when there came upon us that promised power to proclaim, as prophets of the Lord, the truth that would overcome the world—*that Jesus of Nazareth, the One Crucified, had risen from the dead.*

Many times in those last ten days I had heard them tell of His going from them, the group that stood with Him on the Mount of Olives. Over and over I had heard His last words repeated. "Go ye into all the world and preach my Gospel to every creature." And, when that promised power had come upon us, I felt, as did all the rest of the company, the compelling urge to begin the conquest of the world for Christ, a task impossible except for His promise—"I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world."

The coming of the power was not like the opening of the tomb, for this was accompanied by a noise as of a rushing mighty wind, heard not by us alone, but in all parts of the city. It seemed to have been localized or focused upon the house in which we had been waiting, so that men in all parts of the city ran toward it to learn the cause. Proselytes from all lands were in Jerusalem attending the feast. The streets were soon crowded. Suddenly one after the other of us began to speak, using words and tongues hitherto unknown to us, and not even understood by us now. But as we spoke, we saw different faces before us light up as they heard words spoken in their own tongues. It was a most wonderful experience, and we knew that Christ had redeemed already His promise to be with us, and that His other words were true—"I will draw all men

unto me"—for, in that gathering about us, men from every nation accepted Him as the promised Messiah.

Some tried to discount or minimize this miraculous gift of tongues by declaring that we were babbling in intoxication. But Peter denied this charge, declaring that this was the fulfilment of the prophetic words of Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams." And then Peter spoke to them as I never before had heard any one speak; and when he had closed this most wonderful presentation of Jesus as the Promised One, thousands believed and asked for baptism in His name. This was only the beginning; for day after day, in groups large and small, they continued to yield to the pleadings of all those who bore witness to Jesus as the risen Christ.

One of the first concerns of the newly formed association of believers was the relief of want and suffering. A common fund for this purpose was created, and from it such amounts as were needed were withdrawn. This was at first under the control of The Twelve who had been closest to Jesus; but the eagerness of every one now to hear the message occupied so much of their time that this part of their work suffered from neglect.

Israel had been divided into two hostile camps before either John the Baptist or Jesus of Nazareth had appeared. The occasion of this division and hostility dates far back to the days of the Babylonish captivity, or rather to the days of our liberation under Cyrus.

Permission was given to all to return, as I have already said; but many were not enamored of the prospect, and remained in Babylon. Those who did return early, and who labored long to restore Jerusalem and Canaan to their former condition, looked upon those who returned after the work had been done as shirkers, and even in my day this bitter feeling prevailed. The situation was very similar to that which had prevailed for centuries between Israel and the Samaritans.

The "Hellenists," as we were called—and I was one of them—were denied entrance to the synagog and were treated with contempt by the more conservative Galileans and Judeans; but into the new faith Hellenists, Galileans and Judeans alike had entered in large numbers. Whether intentional or not, it seemed that the old prejudice still existed and found frequent expression in withholding aid from the Hellenist widows, tho these were as justly entitled to assistance as others, because they were, beyond all doubt, Israelites and believers in Christ.

Complaint was made to The Twelve, and it was felt by them that witnessing for Christ was so important that to give it up in order to take care of these needy cases would be a serious mistake. It was their judgment, therefore, that a new office should be created, that of deacon, whose duty it should be to render such service as this, and to attend to other temporal concerns of the rapidly growing company of believers. The order was issued that seven men should be chosen for this work, men of good standing, men filled with the spirit of God, men possessed of common sense, men thoroughly consecrated to the King and the Kingdom.

Three of them were to be of the Hellenist group, three of the Galileans, and one from the Proselyte section. The selection was made, resulting in the choice of Stephen, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolas and myself. This choice was ratified by The Twelve, and we were ordained to the office by the laying on of hands, and by prayer.

The very rapid growth in the number of believers aroused the fears, stimulated the jealousies, and revived the opposition of the Sanhedrin, who determined to inaugurate persecution as a means of checking or utterly destroying the new movement. This most terrible task, as it proved to be, was committed to the hands of a young man, Saul of Tarsus. No restrictions were placed upon his activities, which began at once in Jerusalem.

Frightful tortures were inflicted upon any who would not blaspheme the name of Jesus. We expected some to yield before such threats and penalties, but to our great joy, courage sufficient to endure all things, even death itself, was given them, and our growth was not even checked. The greatest loss that came to us occurred when Stephen, one of the seven deacons, was stoned to death in Jerusalem as he closed one of the most wonderful appeals that I have ever heard. He died under a hail of stones, but with a prayer for the forgiveness of his slayers on his lips.

After this heavy loss, and after so clear a demonstration of the determination of our enemies, The Twelve advised flight from Jerusalem, on the part of others than themselves, until the fury of the storm should abate. This advice was heeded, and great num-

bers of believers left the city and sought refuge in places near and far away; but wherever they went they bore witness to the resurrection of Jesus, and to Him as the Redeemer of as many as would believe.

I did not want to leave The Twelve, whose fellowship had meant so much to me, but they advised me to go. Recognizing their right to advise, if not to command, I consented to go. But where should I go? I gave the matter careful thought. While still undecided, the words of Jesus came to me, His last words: "Go ye into all the world and preach my Gospel to every creature." But the world, in my day, presented a very wide field. Later, other words of Jesus enabled me to reach a conclusion. Before His death, in an attempt to impress upon his disciples the importance of their part in His plans for the Kingdom, He had said: "Ye shall bear witness for me in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the world." I was sure that He had not spoken carelessly of their part, or of the order of their witness-bearing. We had borne most fruitful testimony in Jerusalem. The word of His resurrection from the dead had permeated Judea. The next section in Jesus' own order was Samaria. I decided to go there.

I confess that Samaria did not appeal to me as a very hopeful or promising field. Ever since the first return of Israel from Babylon, a feud had existed, and there was no indication that it had become less bitter in my day. The story of the feud is as follows:

When we were deported by Nebuchadnezzar, he imported other captives to take our places. If the number had been sufficient to occupy the whole terri-

tory, all might have been well; but a large portion of the land was uncared for, and wild beasts multiplied rapidly. Being superstitious, these aliens came to the conclusion that the beasts existed in such numbers because the gods of the land were not being properly worshiped; so they sent to Babylon asking that a priest of the faith of the land might be sent them, in order that they might learn to worship the god of the land and thus be freed from this peril. A priest of Jehovah was sent, and the result was what might have been expected—a mongrel religion, part true, part false.

Upon the return of Israel and the start of the work of rebuilding the Temple, representatives of these outsiders approached the elders of Israel, and asked to be allowed to help in the building of the Temple to Jehovah, basing their request upon the fact that they worshiped Him as did Israel. This very natural and gracious request was curtly and cruelly refused. They were angered, naturally, and immediately offered such opposition locally and at Babylon that the work of rebuilding was suspended for years by order of the King of Babylon. This hatred had continued for centuries, until, in the day in which I lived, it was unwise and unsafe for a Samaritan or a Hebrew to be found in the territory of the other.

When the enemies of Jesus wanted to say as mean a thing about Him as they could conceive, they charged Him with being a Samaritan possessed by a devil. Jesus, on one of His early journeys with The Twelve, had passed directly through Samaria instead of going around, as was the practise. Night was falling, and

accommodations for Him and for the disciples were asked for; but, because they were traveling in the direction of Jerusalem, they were denied hospitality. This so angered some of the disciples that they clamored for permission to call down fire from heaven to consume the village. Not a very promising situation!

Yet the task was not without its encouragement. In the first place, when they had been refused a part in erecting the Temple at Jerusalem, they returned to Samaria and erected a temple of their own to Him whom they, maybe, did worship somewhat ignorantly. Then, too, Jesus had promised to be with those who would bear witness in Samaria, as well as in Jerusalem and Judea and the uttermost parts of the world. As a further encouragement, there was Jesus' own experience with the people of Sychar, when the whole city believed on Him; and, if anything more were needed, there was the statement of the woman at the well, which showed clearly that the Samaritans were hoping for the coming of the Messiah. Of this Messiah I was to tell them, and who would be bold enough to assert that the leaven of Sychar had lost its power to extend itself throughout the length and breadth of Samaria? Jesus and The Twelve had found marvelous results in Gadara, where the restored demoniac had been left to tell of what great things God had done for him. Possibly Samaria was not so forbidding or so hopeless as she might appear to be.

I said nothing of my determination to The Twelve, but as I neared Samaria my confidence grew, and I was eager to begin my work. I had had no special training. I had not even enjoyed the long, close, personal con-

tact with Jesus which the others had enjoyed; but I had long ago accepted Him as my redeemer. I had seen Him after His resurrection from the dead, and could state this as a fact of personal experience; and I had also been given—on the Day of Pentecost—the Holy Spirit, who, we had been assured, would greatly aid us in our work by putting the needed words into our mouths and by opening the hearts of men to our message.

I went directly to Samaria, the capital city, and began my work. Here I found a situation which was wholly unexpected. I was prepared to meet the old opposition and hatred; but I discovered one who, having heard of the claims of Jesus, had made great claims for himself, supporting them by tricks of magic until the whole city had come under his control. This, however, did not shake my confidence in that promise: "I will be with thee."

I began to tell the story of Jesus, dwelling but little upon His miracles of healing, but much upon His death, presenting Him as a sacrifice for sin, and especially emphasizing His rising from the dead, giving them my own experience as proof. I had seen Him on the cross, in the grave, and alive again. God very graciously honored my word and my touch, and miracles of healing were wrought in such a way that all suspicion of trickery, such as the purported healings of Simon the Sorcerer always entailed, was removed; nor did I ever accept money as reward. As a result, great numbers turned to the Lord, and asked to be baptized in His name. I was overjoyed, and labored

ceaselessly, thanking God constantly for His blessing upon my word of testimony.

Joy prevailed throughout all Samarita over the proof that the great God, whom they had tried to worship, had made a place for them in His great plan of salvation. God had also taught me the lesson of His all-embracing love in such a way that I would never forget it—in such a way that it would be impossible for me to hold again that restricted view of His compassion which confined His favor, His blessing, His mercy, to the children of Abraham.

In some way word of this great revival in Samaria reached Jerusalem and The Twelve. The age-old prejudice made acceptance of the report almost impossible. So, Peter and John were delegated to visit Samaria, to investigate, and to report again. They came, and were amazed at what they saw, and in sincerity of heart glorified God for what He had done among this despised people. They judged these Samaritan converts as worthy to be admitted to the company of believers, and also declared them to be worthy to receive the blessing of full discipleship; so, laying their hands upon them, they prayed and bestowed upon them the Holy Spirit for service, as we had received Him at Pentecost.

Of all those who accepted Jesus as Saviour, only one—Simon the Sorcerer—gave proof of insincerity in his action.

Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, while I continued at work in Samaria. What I had witnessed here of God's favor upon other than Israel's stock, prepared me for the task that God next asked me to do.

"At Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and *even unto the uttermost parts of the earth*" was His order. From this most wonderful work in Samaria I was suddenly called away by an angel messenger, who spoke to me in a vision, directing me to go southward to the main highway between Jerusalem and Gaza. No hint was given of the purpose of this visit, but I went, and waited for God to reveal His will. Soon a chariot of royal type approached me, and passed on. In it rode an Ethiopian whose appearance spoke of affluence. He was deeply interested in the reading of a scroll, so that he did not see me. That voice within, which I had come to recognize and obey without question, directed me to draw near and join myself to the chariot. I did so, and found that the man was reading from the prophecy of Isaiah the portion in which the death of Jesus was foretold, Jesus being compared to the lamb silent and unprotesting before the shearers. I asked him if he understood what he was reading. He confessed that he did not and could not unless some one should aid him. He invited me into the chariot, and I discovered that he was the treasurer of Candace, the Queen of Ethiopia; that he had been at Jerusalem at the time of the Feast of Pentecost; that he was now on his way home, and that he was trying to understand what he had both seen and heard in Jerusalem.

I began back in the prophecies of the true faith, showing him how all the Messianic predictions pointed to Jesus of Nazareth, and found their fulfilment in Him. As we journeyed, we came to a small stream of water. He asked if he might be baptized in the name of Jesus. I told him that there was no reason why he

should not be baptized, if he believed with all his heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. And then I heard this one who was not of Jerusalem, nor of Judea, nor yet of Samaria, but from the outermost parts of the world, confess what I had heard in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria: *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* We went together to the water, where, with great joy, I administered and he received baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. The Spirit who had guided me so that I met this lone Ethiopian eunuch in the desert highway and won him to Christ, now snatched me from him, so that I never saw the man again; but I had once more learned that salvation through faith in Jesus Christ was, in God's wonderful mercy, for men at hand and afar off; for as many as would call upon His name.

I was very deeply impressed and greatly rejoiced when I first placed my faith in Jesus Christ as my Saviour, my personal Saviour, and became a disciple. But when to my simple faith was added the tremendous fact that my confidence was not based upon a crucified Saviour only—a Saviour who had loved me enough to die for me—but upon a Saviour triumphant over sin, and death, and the grave, a risen, glorified, ever living Redeemer, my joy increased by leaps and bounds, until I thought it had reached the fullest development possible. But God had more in store for me than this, the nature and worth of which I had not dreamed. It was given me on the Day of Pentecost, when a holy flame touched me, a holy zeal possessed my mind and heart, and I knew that His former promises of power and of prophecy had been fulfilled, and

that His promise of help in the days to come would not be broken. My joy again overflowed.

But when I saw men turn to him, accept Him, confess Him, rejoice in Him and in the salvation made real by His death and resurrection, and receive baptism in His blessed name *because of my word of witness,* I knew the greatest measure of joy that God grants to any man in this earthly life.

Have you, to whom I have told the story of my labors for Jesus, known the wonderful joy in yielding to the pleading of the Spirit of God, and in accepting and confessing Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, and in receiving baptism in His name? I know that you have.

Did you feel that deeper joy which came when to your simple creed there was added a realization of the fact that your faith was resting upon a foundation that could never be shaken—upon an eternal Christ, a Christ who had conquered death and the grave, a Christ who had triumphed gloriously? Yes, I know that you felt it.

Did there not come into your soul a new joy as your spirit felt the touch of the Holy Spirit, and you began to see that which had been hidden before, and to understand that which had been clouded and mysterious? Yes, I know that it came, and that you were as happy as you thought it possible to be.

But let me say to you that you will never know the greatest possible joy until you have obeyed the command of Jesus, "Go ye; bear witness for me"; until you have seen men forsake their sin, turn to God, and accept the Christ as their Saviour because of what you

have said. Oh! let nothing less than this joy satisfy you. And may you be always conscious of the presence and the help of Him who said, "I will be with you even unto the end of the world."

XV

PAUL, THE ADVERSARY AND THE ADVOCATE

"Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles. . . . And Saul, yet breathing out threatening and slaughter against the Church, went unto the High Priest and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogs that if he found any of this way, whether they be men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

"And as he journeyed, he came near to Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' And he said, 'Who art thou, Lord?' And the Lord said unto him, 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.' And he trembling and astonished said, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' And the Lord said unto him, 'Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.' . . . . And when he had received meat he was strengthened. . . .

"Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were in Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogs, that He is the Son of God . . . and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ."

XV

PAUL, THE ADVERSARY AND THE ADVOCATE

ON the occasion of my last visit to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of the Passover, I was very happy to report to James and the elders of the Church, what great things God had wrought among the Gentile nations by me. They were greatly rejoiced, and glorified God with me; but rumors had preceded me, according to which, they said, I had been represented as one who taught contrary to the Mosaic Law. These rumors had created no little prejudice against me among the Jews at Jerusalem. James and the other apostles urged me to quiet these tales, if they were but rumors, by assuming a vow with others, and conforming publicly to the requirements of the Law in the matter of purification. I very willingly consented to comply with this request.

When the required seven days were about ended, enemies of mine from Asia (Jews) laid hands upon me, and cried out, declaring that I had polluted the Temple by taking into it Greek proselytes who had accompanied me to the feast. This, of course, was not true; but it furnished a pretext for attacking me, and had it not been for the watchfulness of the Captain of the Guard, who rushed a company of soldiers to the scene, rescuing me, I would have been torn to pieces by the frenzied mob. The uproar was great, the mob

frantic, and so bent upon my destruction that the soldiers were compelled to carry me on their shoulders to the castle stairs.

Here I asked the Captain of the company for permission to speak to him. He was surprized that I could speak in the Grecian tongue; for he had thought me an Egyptian who had caused more or less trouble recently. I assured him that I could speak in the Grecian tongue, and that I was not an Egyptian, but a Hebrew, a citizen of Tarsus, in Cilicia, a city of no mean reputation. I asked him for permission to speak to the crowd that had attacked me. Receiving consent, I spoke to my countrymen in the Hebrew tongue, not in the Greek, tho most of my audience could have understood the Greek language.

I have spoken of this incident because I am anxious that you appreciate the true greatness of the city of my birth, Tarsus, the commercial metropolis of Cilicia.

I was born in this foreign land and city, rather than in Israel's sacred Heritage and Holiest City, because my ancestry, with many other Israelites, had been a part of that sad dispersion which took place at the time of our defeat and deportation by the armies of Babylon. Centuries had passed, but not yet had their children all returned to the land from which they had been thrust out so cruelly. They had drifted during many generations, but not without that gain which is acquired by travel and contact with the learning and culture of the most enlightened peoples of the world.

But our land had not been forgotten. and more and more our faces were set, and our feet were turned, toward Zion, the city of the Great King. Many had al-

ready reached Jerusalem, and had carried with them much that had been acquired, so that there was a sad division in the nation religiously. The more conservative Galileans would not permit these modernists to enter their synagog; so, places of worship in large numbers were built by them—in fact, a large majority of the synagogs in Jerusalem were under their control.

A great number, my father and mother among them, had located in Tarsus; had prospered greatly in this opulent city; had obtained an enviable position socially; and it was here that I was born.

Not all, by any means, had adopted the customs, the philosophy, or the religious vagaries of the Greeks. My father and mother were among the company who could not so easily cast aside all that the past had meant to them and been to them. They had been members of the Pharisaic sect, and were most rigid in all their observances of even the minute requirements of the Law; and I was carefully instructed and trained by them.

When I reached school age, I had acquired a speaking knowledge of Greek, and was sent to school; later I entered the University of Tarsus, which had gained a standing of equality with—and I am not sure but a superiority to—similar institutions of learning in Athens and Alexandria. The fact is that Roman emperors and nobles came to Tarsus to secure tutors for their children; from all lands, students came to Tarsus, and her philosophers went out from Tarsus to enlighten the world.

Wanting me to have the very best intellectual training obtainable, my parents sent me to my home university; but they also watched very carefully that the

materialistic ideas which prevailed here did not displace or threaten to displace my allegiance to Moses and the Prophets.

My mother had ever held before me the one great ambition of her life for me—a return to my own land, and my advancement to a place of leadership among my people. She had dreamed of my rapid rise to that office coveted earnestly by every Israelitish man—a seat among "The Seventy," the Sanhedrin. She not only dreamed of this, but she prayed for it, and planned for it through every waking hour.

She well knew the requirements for this exalted place, and she knew what would prevent attainment; so, when I had finished my school days in Tarsus, the next step was a training of equal standard in the religious school at Jerusalem. So I was sent there to round out my preparation.

A name which had become a synonym for devotion, for thoroughness, for intellectual brilliancy, wherever men of learning met, was that of Gamaliel, of Jerusalem. Far and wide his fame had spread, and not without reason. He had come of a long line of brilliant and devout men. His father was Simeon, who was reported, about ten years before my birth, to have been in the Temple at Jerusalem, at the time when a man named Joseph, and his wife, Mary, presented a newborn male child, according to the custom and the Law, and is said to have taken Him in his arms and blessed Him, and to have said something about his being "The Hope of Israel."

To the school of which Gamaliel was the head, I was sent, and under him I developed an enthusiasm for

the religion of my fathers, which far outstripped my passion for learning in the schools of Tarsus. This fact greatly pleased my father and mother. Nor was the great Gamaliel slow in recognizing my scholarship. He commended me for my zeal, and opened the door for my introduction to some of his close friends who were of The Seventy. These, too, welcomed me and praised me, tho I was only a youth.

I had one other asset which I prized greatly, second only to my Israelitish ancestry—my Roman citizenship. This I inherited from my father, so that I was a free-born citizen of this vast empire.

This citizenship, in the later years of my life, saved me much in suffering and in humiliation. Once, when threatened with scourging, I protested against it, urging my Roman citizenship; and, altho bound to the whipping-post, no lash fell upon my flesh, and my bonds were quickly loosed, and an apology was offered. Again, when my life was threatened and my liberty was imperiled by threats of enemies among my own nation, I appealed my case to Rome, which I had a perfect right to do, and this appeal defeated the plots of those who would destroy me. Of these two things, for whose obtaining I was in no way responsible, I was very proud: my membership in the People of Jehovah, and my citizenship in the greatest temporal power of the age in which I lived.

From my nineteenth to my twenty-fourth year, great unrest in religious thought and practise prevailed from one end of the land to the other, due largely to the appearance of two men, one, John the Baptist, the other, Jesus of Nazareth. Both acquired quickly large

followings. Particularly was this true of Jesus of Nazareth, because His efforts were continued longer than John's, and because He was much the greater of the two. His labors were largely confined to the northern part of the kingdom, near Capernaum. He and His followers always came to Jerusalem at the times of the feasts, and, I have been told, very much of the joy and fervor of these great festivals was destroyed by His presence and His utterances. The Seventy were very greatly distressed, and, charged as they were with the preservation of the purity of religious instruction given to the people—also charged with the preservation of the safety of the nation itself, which was now under the hated rule of Rome, and greatly endangered by the bitter prejudices of Pilate, the governor of the province, who lost no opportunity to express his personal hatred for us and to impress Rome with our lack of loyalty to her—they determined to check for all time this free and independent instruction in the meaning of the Scriptures, by destroying the leaders of such movements, whoever they might be, and by exalting the majesty of Jehovah's law, given to us through Moses.

A course of action was formulated and followed. This resulted in the condemnation by the Sanhedrin, and the crucifixion by order of Pilate, of Jesus of Nazareth, at the time of the great feast, when I was about twenty-eight years old.

I heard much of Jesus. It was impossible not to hear of Him, for among the lowliest of the people and the highest court members He was talked of constantly. But I never heard Him speak. I regarded Him much as

I did the advocates of the Grecian philosophy; that is, as an enemy of the established truth, an agency to be shunned as a thing polluted, and to be fought with every available weapon.

My strong prejudices for the old, and against any and every innovation—prejudices which had been bred into me and developed systematically by parents and teachers—led me to regard Him as a religious revolutionist, who would undermine and destroy faith in the most sacred things of our God-revealed religion. So, whenever He came to Jerusalem, I stayed as far away from Him and His group as it was possible for me to get.

I was most happy when Gamaliel, one morning in class, told us that the great danger to the nation was past; that the Destroyer had Himself been destroyed; that God's holy Law had been freed from its most dangerous foe by the way of the cross, and that the danger from Roman invasion had been greatly reduced by our demonstration of loyalty in the crucifixion of the pretender, Jesus of Nazareth. I was certain that so great a man as Gamaliel could not be mistaken, and we returned to our studies satisfied that we had seen and heard the last of this troublesome matter.

But Gamaliel, great as he was, was wrong in his judgment. Within ten days Jerusalem was in a ferment over the report, which could not be put down, that this same Jesus who had died upon the cross on Golgotha was actually alive and showing himself to His followers. What is more, the people were actually believing in His resurrection from the dead. Of course, this could not be other than foolishness. Surely no

sensible person would ever hold to such arrant nonsense. But there is no use to try to disguise the fact that the Sanhedrin was greatly troubled. Especially did this concern become noticeable after the Feast of Pentecost, when His followers, with a courage and an air of certainty that was most convincing, not to say startling, boldly declared that the resurrection of their Master was a fact beyond dispute, and charged the Sanhedrin with the crucifixion of the promised Messiah, for whose appearance all Israel had waited anxiously for centuries. Not only was this done, but, what was much worse, thousands in Jerusalem were believing it, were confessing—in spite of the edict forbidding it—their faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, and were being baptized in his name.

The growth of this group was amazingly rapid, and, in fact, appalled The Seventy. Something must be done to stop it. The leaders were arrested and cast into prison, threatened, forbidden to continue; but they were utterly fearless, and showed contempt for any and all decrees of the highest court of the nation.

I was outspoken always in my denunciation of everything that looked like heresy in teaching, or that appeared contemptuous of authority. But such heresy as this, such disregard of the Sanhedrin's deliverance, was unprecedented. Of course, the utter denial of miracles was not to be thought of; for our prophets of old time had done many marvelous things. It could not be denied, either, that this Jesus had done some unusual things. But the resurrection of Himself, without aid or demand from any source, stood alone and apart, and, if substantiated by unquestionable proof, might do

great injury. That this had actually occurred—that Jesus had risen from the dead—was the confident assertion of His friends and followers.

Persecution must be resorted to. Men might hold certain views when the cost was little or nothing, but it was another matter when the price of believing was great as one's life itself. I had met many of The Seventy. I had been regarded by them as a possible member of their company when a vacancy should occur. To these men I had repeatedly expressed my conviction that such extremes should be checked, and checked at once by the most drastic measures, if such were necessary. They agreed with me, and after numerous conferences with them, the Sanhedrin appointed me to take charge of this task of extermination, promising me all the power and help needed. I accepted the commission with the understanding that persecution should begin at once in Jerusalem, the center of the cult, and that I was to be limited in no way.

I picked my associates with great care, and instructed them in my methods—imprisonment, stripes, torture of any type, to be meted out until the accused would gladly blaspheme the name of Jesus; but, in case this was not done, the obstinate ones were to be brought before the Sanhedrin for trial and sentence of death; for this body alone could pronounce the sentence of death.

We began our task immediately, with the result that, after a few had been arrested and punished most cruelly, many who feared arrest fled from the city, thus confirming my judgment that suffering, such as I proposed to administer, would quickly put a damper on

their ardor. They found refuge in places far and near; but, while this made our task harder to accomplish and of longer duration than we had thought, we were not deterred; for we pursued them and brought them back to Jerusalem. But our greatest surprize was met when we found that, instead of blaspheming the name of Jesus, they were ready and willing to suffer and die for their faith in Him. Their stubbornness intensified my hatred for them and for their faith, and with all the more determination we pursued them from place to place.

This continued for about four years, during which time many were punished. Constant and increasing approval and encouragement came to me from all sides. I had now reached the age at which men could be chosen for service in the Sanhedrin, and, to the great joy of my mother, I was elevated to this position of prominence and power. Her life-dream for me had been realized. The duties of this office did not interrupt the work of extermination. I redoubled my efforts.

In my first years as a member of The Seventy, the Emperor of Rome died. Pilate had been summoned to Rome to answer charges preferred against him by us, and had been deposed from his office in Judea. Caiaphas had also been removed from the office of High Priest, and their successors in office had not yet been named. So we were left very much alone, so far as Rome was concerned, and we used our long-suppressed authority and freedom to administer justice as we saw fit. We were free from the necessity of obtaining Rome's approval of our death sentences. This greatly

favored my work, and many suffered death by stoning, at our hands; for this, not the cross, was our method of putting to death. The cross was Roman.

One of the most prominent of those whom we executed was a Hellenist Jew named Stephen, whose eloquence and learning had made him especially dangerous to us. He had also been chosen a deacon in the new organization, and was a man of great influence and power. We had to employ witnesses and accept perjured testimony, but his removal must be accomplished quickly. I can not even yet blot out of my memory his terrible arraignment of us as the murderers of the Messiah of our race. Nor can I ever forget the logic and the eloquence with which he made his great appeal, not for his own life, but for our repentance and our acceptance of Jesus as our Redeemer. Never can anything dim my recollection of his face, as he closed his appeal with a prolonged look into the heavens, and the declaration that he beheld the hated Jesus sitting on the right hand of the Father, God, in His glory.

With an outburst of rage, such as I had never before witnessed, the mob rushed upon him and stoned him to death. The witnesses against him, according to our law, must strike him with the first stone. These young men laid down their garments at my feet.

We heard much of the development or spread of this new faith in Damascus. I had never gone so far from Jerusalem—one hundred and sixty miles—but I determined to go thither, and at once. The newly appointed High Priest gave me letters to those in authority in Damascus, then under Roman rule, demanding the delivery of those of "The Way" who

might be found there, for punishment at Jerusalem. This demand was recognized and honored, because Cæsar had decreed that, while an Israelite might become a Roman citizen by forswearing allegiance to Israel, he never became other than a Jew, always subject to the demands of the High Priest and The Seventy.

Assembling an impressive force, we started from Jerusalem for Damascus. Five days were consumed by the journey. As I thought of the rich prize that awaited us on our arrival; as I anticipated the punishment of those whom we should find; as I tried to imagine their surprize and their terror at our approach to and appearance in Damascus, my hatred for them became terrible in its intensity, and my joy in my work passed all bounds.

We were about ten miles outside the city. Its towers were clearly seen, as they glistened in the sunlight. I was so saturated with hatred for this heretical sect, that I was actually breathing out threats and slaughter against them; when, without a moment's warning, without so much as a sound to apprise us of what was coming, a light more dazzling than the brilliant light of the noonday sun enveloped us, and stopped us in our journey as tho we had been turned to stone.

I do not recall any struggle with my mount. I do not recall any plunging on his part, but I was unseated and fell to the ground. It was not a sunstroke, for I was conscious of all that happened about me.

While I lay upon the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me, calling me by name, and saying: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The light was too blinding

to permit me to open my eyes. I had persecuted no one as yet in this neighborhood, so I was at a loss to know who the speaker might be. I replied, "Who art thou? . . . Who is it that I have been persecuting here? I came hither to persecute, but I have laid hands upon no one. Who art thou?"

Imagine my amazement when back came the reply: *"I am Jesus of Nazareth. Saul, it is hard for thee to kick against the goads; it is hard for thee to oppose the will of God, that the world should be redeemed from sin by means of a crucified and risen Redeemer."*

Jesus of Nazareth! Jesus of Nazareth! The One whom the Sanhedrin had sent to the cross! The One whom I had despised because of the curse of the cross! Jesus, whom I had forced men to deny or pay with their liberty or lives for their allegiance to Him! Jesus speaking to me from heaven! Jesus, who, the Sanhedrin had assured me, had not risen, but whose body had been stolen from the tomb while the Roman soldiers had slept at their posts before it in the garden! This Jesus was alive and speaking to me! Hardly knowing what I was saying, I cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and He said, "Rise, and go into Damascus, and it will be shown thee what thou *must* do."

I rose from the ground, but my sight was gone. I groped about for my horse, but could not find him. My call for assistance was the first intimation that my companions had of my misfortune. They came to my aid at once, and helped me to mount. Nothing less than consternation prevailed in my company. Here they were, one hundred and sixty miles from home; their

leader stricken with blindness, and in a city to which and in which they were total strangers.

I realized fully that my days as an active persecutor of the believers in Jesus were at an end. But to think or to plan for the future was impossible at the moment. I directed my aides to conduct me to the city, and to inquire for the home of Judas, who lived on the street called Straight, where Jesus had told me I must wait for the promised instruction.

Our entrance into the city of Damascus was very different from what I had planned. We had determined to strike terror to the hearts of those of "The Way"; instead, we were entering the city already overwhelmed with the sense of defeat. We were quickly recognized, but our appearance was far from impressive. Imagine, if you can, a company bent on persecution, led by a man who is blind! No fear could be inspired under such circumstances.

My mind was in a whirl. What could it mean? Jesus had just spoken to me, and I had called Him "Lord." He had given me orders, and I was now obedient to Him. What would the end be, and when would it come?

I had no idea how long I would be compelled to wait for instruction; I knew not whether my blindness would be temporary or permanent; but I did know that every day of delay would mean increasing uneasiness and dissatisfaction among my associates. I could do nothing but wait.

Interminable days passed. Sleepless nights came and went. Judas was a gracious host, but all his kindnesses could not help in solving my problem.

I had been taught as a child that prayer was a great help in trouble. As a Pharisee, I had prayed many times and had offered prayers that were long. Now I felt, as never before, the need of the counsel and the comfort of my God.

All the formulas that I had been taught, and had so often repeated, revealed their emptiness before I used them; so I cast them all aside, and falling on my knees, I just talked with God as I would have talked over my distress and need with my mother. I asked to be shown why this blindness had come upon me while I was so zealous in His service. I asked Him to clear away the dimness of my understanding, and help me to know the meaning of my meeting with Jesus of Nazareth, who had accused me of persecuting Him. I asked Him to make His will for me known to me quickly.

Almost as I spoke these words, I was conscious of the presence of some one in my room. I rose from my knees, and stood, as I thought, facing him. He was speaking to me, and there was something in his voice that held my closest attention. I felt that he would tell me what I was to do. "Brother Saul," he began, "the Lord Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way, as thou camest hither, hath sent me unto thee, that thou mayest receive thy sight."

"Brother Saul!" A very different salutation from that with which I would have greeted him, I assure you, had this blindness not come upon me; for this man, Ananias by name, was one of several in Damascus of whom I had planned to make an example. Yes, I

had marked him for death in a manner that would strike terror to the hearts of others in Damascus.

Then he told me how Jesus had appeared unto him, and had told him where I was to be found and what I was doing—praying; what he should do—lay his hands upon me, and give me back my sight; how he had remonstrated, reminding Jesus that I had persecuted cruelly, in Jerusalem, men like himself; that I had come to Damascus to destroy; how Jesus had again commanded him to come to me, assuring him that my days as a persecutor, an adversary, were at an end; that my days as an advocate were just now dawning; that I was a chosen vessel unto Him; that I would carry the new faith to the Gentile nations; that I would glorify Him before kings of the earth, and that I would unhesitatingly proclaim Him as the Christ of God before my own people Israel.

I listened while he told me all this, but was unable to believe what he said. Then I felt his hands again upon me, and, as he touched my sightless eyes, I heard him say, "Brother Saul, in the name of Jesus, receive thy sight."

Immediately my eyes were opened, and I looked up into his face. I put forth my hand and took his hand in mine in a firm grip. For a moment we looked into each other's eyes. The intense fear of me, which I read in his eyes, disappeared; the hatred of him in my heart had gone, and I knew that we were now brothers in the new faith.

At his hand I received baptism into the name of Jesus—the name that had always caused me to rage—and as I felt the water of baptism upon me, there

came over me a sense of cleansing such as no lustral washing had ever brought to me, and I felt at peace with God and with all mankind. I had not touched food since I saw Jesus in the way, but now food was set before me, and I was greatly strengthened.

Can you imagine such a transformation in so short a time? And yet it had occurred, as completely and as quickly as I have told you. I was now a Christian, a believer.

The really difficult task was yet before me. Something must be done with, and for, those who had accompanied me to Damascus. They could not be set adrift without explanation or reason. They had been loyal to me; I could not leave them uninformed of the change in my plans.

As soon as I had regained my strength sufficiently for the task, I called them to me; told them what had occurred; informed them that I could no longer lead them or accompany them in their work of persecuting those who called upon and believed in the name of Jesus, because I myself had become a follower of Him; and I urged them to follow me in this step as they had followed me in my persecutions. As I spoke to them, I could see the bitter hatred for me that blazed in their eyes—just such a hatred as I had felt for others—and yet, in some of them, I read an expression of sympathy for me, and even of pity. When I had finished, I dismissed them, and ordered their return to Jerusalem, placing them in charge of one whom I had always regarded as second in command.

The disciples in Damascus found it hard to believe

that I was not using deception to gain knowledge that would be used against them later; but Ananias removed this suspicion by his account of the Lord's appearance unto him, and His commands to him, and His remarkable words concerning me. Then they received me gladly.

Here in Damascus, where I had planned to destroy, I began my ministry of persuasion, which was to continue for many years most happily and most successfully.

Of course, there was persecution; Jesus had told Ananias that I would suffer greatly for His sake, and it was but natural to suppose that my colleagues of other days would not forget or forgive one who had deserted them in the hour of apparent victory. But I was willing to endure all things, and to suffer all things, if by enduring and suffering I could atone, in part, for those years spent as an adversary of Him who called me from the sordid task of inflicting torture upon His followers to the most glorious task ever committed to men—the proclaiming of Him as the Son of God, and the leading of men to an acceptance of Him as their personal Saviour.

Try to forget, will you not, that I ever opposed Him? Try to think of me as a witness who never wearied of telling the story of the Crucified and Risen Christ. I have tried to forget all the unhappy past, and to think of the glory of the unending days with Him; and I have, in part, succeeded, and for this I bow my knees in gratitude to God.

You will remember that I said, a little while ago, that there were two things of which I was very proud,

tho for their possession I was in no way responsible—my Roman and my Israelitish citizenship. I was proud of my citizenship in the great empire, but I was prouder of my descent from Abraham, which made me a member of God's chosen people. With great pride I proclaimed both to the world.

But now even above these I esteem my membership in that already great, and ever increasing company, which accepts and confesses Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and King, and with a far greater feeling of pride do I proclaim my citizenship in His everlasting kingdom.

Before I met Him in the way, I gloried in the other two, but God forbid that either you or I should ever again glory in anything other than the cross of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation for as many as believe, by which the world is crucified unto us and we are crucified unto the world.

XVI

PAUL, AFTER DAMASCUS

"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which things also I did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagog, and compelled them to blaspheme; and, being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests.

"At midday, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me and saying in the Hebrew tongue, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in which I will appear unto thee.' . . . Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles."

XVI

PAUL, AFTER DAMASCUS

AFTER those who had accompanied me to Damascus on my mission of persecution fully realized that I had become a follower of Jesus, instead of a leader against Him, they tarried a few days, hoping that they might yet accomplish something of the harm they had come so far to inflict. But my defection had so disorganized them that they soon left Damascus for Jerusalem, tho not without first warning me that it would not be well for me to appear in Jerusalem as an advocate of the new faith; that if I did return and give my testimony for these heretics, my life would not be worth much to me or to my new-found friends.

Against their threats and warnings, however, I had the words of assurance from Jesus, my new Master, to the effect that I was a vessel specially selected to carry the blessed message for Him, and from Him, to kings and princes of the earth—to the Gentile nations and also to my own people, Israel. A new-born and strange confidence in this promise of protection from my enemies, coming from Jesus, gave me full measure of courage that nothing could shake.

The disciples at Damascus received me into their confidence and welcomed me to their councils, and so soon as I was physically strong enough for the task,

I began witness-bearing before both Jew and Gentile in the city of my wonderful experience.

It was very difficult to understand or explain this sudden transformation. I do not know, except it were given me from above, whence my preparation for this task of witnessing for Christ came; but I was ready, and here in Damascus, where there were many of my race untouched by the new faith, I met Jews in the streets and in the public places of assembly, and argued with them, disputing their right to deny the claims of the new sect and of Jesus. I spoke with such vigor, with such conviction of the truth of my claims, that they could not stand before me, nor answer me; and this so angered them that they determined to slay me. Ananias and other believers determined to send me away in order to save my life; but the gates of the city were so carefully watched that it was necessary to lower me from the top of the wall to the ground in a basket, and thus I made my escape.

The radical change in my attitude toward Jesus Christ, and the complete alteration of my plans which had taken place, left me mentally and spiritually in such a state of confusion that I felt the need of time apart from all my former associates, and from my new acquaintances; time to rearrange, to readjust, to meditate and to pray; time to listen to that inner quiet voice that would clear away misconceptions and misinterpretations; time to hear again and again the clear voice that I had heard on the road to Damascus, which would speak to me now, not in terms of rebuke or correction, but in tones of tenderness and appeal; time to forget much that I had learned, and time to

learn much that I had never known and could never know, except I should receive it at the fountain head; time to receive and understand the commands that would carry me, perhaps, to new lands and among new peoples, to whom I should be the first herald of this startlingly new religious teaching—faith in a crucified and risen Redeemer as a means of attaining that degree of purity necessary for fellowship and peace with God.

I must have time for all this, and so, after a brief sojourn at Tarsus, where I spoke for a time in my old home, I went to Arabia, where I remained for three years, living much alone, so far as men were concerned, but very much with my Lord, all the time coming to know and understand Him better, coming to comprehend His view-point, coming to appreciate the tremendous fact that one infinite sacrifice could take the place of an infinite number of sacrifices and offerings which might be made upon the altars of my nation, at Jerusalem and elsewhere, and could accomplish a cleansing and a perfection that they could not accomplish. At the same time I came to realize that all this, which seemed so radical and so destructive, was not destructive of the Law and the Prophets, but was in a wonderfully beautiful way a fulfilment of both those branches of God's revelation to us which we revered so highly.

Three years is a long time, but it was not too long for all that I needed, and when they were past, I felt as strong an urge to go forth from my place of retreat—to get among men once more—as had been my desire to get away from them.

Feeling in a most unmistakable way ready for my task, and conscious, too, of the presence of that One who had in so unexpected a way conquered me; confident that He would labor with me and through me, so irresistibly and tirelessly, that His enemies everywhere would be transformed, as I had been, from adversaries to advocates, I hurried forth and returned to Jerusalem.

I had not forgotten the warnings of my former friends, who had become my enemies through my desertion of them at Damascus; but I wanted to meet and be received into the company of those whom Jesus earlier had called to apostolic service, and who were courageously, in the face of bitter opposition, still witnessing for Him in Jerusalem and elsewhere, and laying deep and strong foundations upon which the Church might rest for all time.

I had sent no word to any one of my intention to visit Jerusalem, for my determination to do so came quickly from the Head of the Church. My sudden appearance in my old haunts was a great surprize, and created consternation among the adherents of the old faith and the new.

I attempted to get into touch with Peter and others, but they were not at all gracious to me, nor were they convinced of my sincerity. They held aloof from me, giving me absolutely no encouragement until Barnabas espoused my cause. Barnabas was an Israelite of the tribe of Levi, from near Cyprus, and had been among the first to show confidence in the new Church by selling all his possessions and giving the entire proceeds to the work of the Kingdom. I had a slight

acquaintance with him, and one day he took me by the hand and led me before the others, and vouched for me and for the completeness of the change that had taken place in my attitude toward the Christ. After this, they gave me the greetings of a coworker with them in the Christ-assigned task of witnessing for Him even unto the uttermost parts of the world.

You will remember that in the earlier days quite a number of my people were designated Grecians or Hellenists, because they had been late in returning to Jerusalem from the exile to Babylon; who, when they did come, brought with them a strong element of Greek culture and education, which was resented very bitterly by earlier arrivals. Personally, I was not in sympathy with Grecian philosophy nor with a religion which was altogether mythical; for my parents had guarded me very carefully against such spiritual infection. But I was in full sympathy with their intellectual superiority, which I had enjoyed in my school days in Tarsus, where one of the greatest universities of the world was located.

These Grecian Jews were present now in large numbers in Jerusalem, and were regarded as extremely dangerous because of their liberal views. It was against this class—among whom may be mentioned the deacon, Stephen, who was stoned to death with my approval and consent at the very beginning of my persecutions—that a part of my early efforts at extermination of the Nazarene sect was directed.

These I now met, not with sword and suffering, but with argument and pleading, in an attempt to show them that what I had done was wholly consistent with

the Scriptures; that the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, crucified on the cursed cross, but risen from the dead, did not offer affront to the most brilliant intellect, but was in accord with the highest type of intelligence, both secular and religious.

I was in no sense afraid, but with a boldness that had marked my days of persecution, I now spoke everywhere for, instead of against, the faith which had become a passion with me; but they became very bitter against me, and laid their plans to put me to death.

By this time there remained no doubt in the minds of the apostolic group of my sincerity nor of the complete transformation that had occurred. Learning of the danger that beset me, they advised me to leave Jerusalem for a time, which advice I followed.

Ananias had told me that the risen Lord had told him that I was to bear testimony for Him to the Gentile nations of the world; but through all the months spent in Arabia, and in the days since my return, when I thought upon the great joy and peace, and the fuller understanding of God's mercy and love for all people, that had come to me direct from above, I could not but yearn particularly for my own people. Oh, how I prayed that they might pass through the blessed experience that had been mine! How I yearned that they might know Jesus, whom they still hated, as I knew Him, and love Him as I loved Him! How I pleaded with God that the veil which had dimmed my own vision, until removed by His hand—the veil that was still upon their hearts—might be swept aside, and that they might come to an

appreciation of the length and breadth and height and depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, of whom and through whom are all things! Up to this time, I had addressed my argument and appeal to Israel alone, strong in the hope that my countrymen might turn to Him. But the results had not been of such magnitude as to cheer me or encourage me very much.

At the time of my persecution at Jerusalem, believers in Jesus were advised to flee this center for the time being, at least, and many escaped, seeking safety wherever they thought it might be found; but wherever they went, they spread their faith, appealing only to the Jews who had preceded them to these places. Some of them traveled as far as Cyprus and Antioch, and their work was successful in a marked degree. The church at Jerusalem, hearing of it, sent Barnabas to observe. He was greatly heartened by what he saw, and, after a brief sojourn with them, he came to Tarsus in search of me. Together we returned to Antioch, where we remained a full year, laboring very happily and very successfully. It was here in Antioch that for the first time the name of Christ was applied to those who believed in Him. It is true that we were called Christians in derision, but we were more than glad to bear His name.

The church at Antioch was rich, even after so short a time, in men of great spiritual power—men of prayer and prophetic gifts. These were often with us in planning for the work that was progressing so splendidly. It was in one such gathering for prayer and conference that, after fasting, the Holy Spirit

made known God's will for us, when He called upon this little group to consecrate Barnabas and me for a special service of which we had not as yet been informed. So, after further fasting and prayer, they laid ordaining hands upon us and sent us out with their blessing.

Depending absolutely upon the leadership of the Holy Spirit, we set out upon a mission, of whose details we knew nothing; upon a journey whose destination was hidden from us; and yet, as clearly as tho a map had been prepared for us, we advanced upon our way with no fear of straying from the right path.

Up to this time, aside from the threats against my life, which had been frustrated, I had met with nothing that seemed like a fulfilment of Jesus' words to Ananias in Damascus—"I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

We sailed from Seleucia, and in a short time reached the island of Cyprus, where we entered the synagog and preached to those of our own blood, urging upon them belief in Jesus as the promised Messiah. We sowed the seed here, and felt sure that the harvest would come in due season. Crossing the island, we came to Paphos, where the chief result was the conversion of Sergius, over the strong opposition of Elymas, a sorcerer of great influence, whom I was compelled to discipline for his antagonism by bringing upon him a season of blindness.

I shall not take the time to speak of our experiences in every city, but our program was first to appeal to the Israelites, who were found in large numbers in

every city, and after them, to any who might be willing to hear our message.

It was at Antioch, in Pisidia, that we had our first great demonstration of the readiness of the Gentiles to accept Christ. Following our presentation of the truth to the Jews, the Gentiles came to us and pleaded with us that they too might have the word of God preached unto them. Both Barnabas and I addressed them, and many of them gladly accepted Christ.

The following Sabbath day, the whole of the Gentile portion of the city, and many of the proselytes to the Jewish faith, gathered about us and asked to hear again the wonderful word of God. We could not refuse such a request, but our granting of it brought to me the first real indication of what I was to endure for Christ; for, first of all, the Jews were enraged to think that we would give any share in the blessing of God to the Gentiles, and they withstood us and blasphemed in their opposition; and a little later, still more angered at the eagerness of the Gentiles, they drove us from the city. But we left many converts who remained faithful.

From Paphos we came by boat to Iconium, where great results cheered us, many of both Jews and Gentiles accepting Christ under our testimony. But here, too, real danger was met; for the unbelieving Jews stirred up the city against us, and we were forced to flee to escape stoning at their hands.

Mark, a nephew of Barnabas, accompanied us when we started on our journey; but before we reached Iconium, he had become frightened at the opposition,

and had returned to his home. I was greatly disappointed, and so was Barnabas, for we both loved him.

It was at Lystra, however, that the first serious persecution was experienced by us, and I began to know that the cross was a part of my Christian burden. Here an impotent beggar, who had never walked, we healed so that he leaped to his feet and walked. The people, who were heathen, immediately regarded us as some of their own gods who had come down to them in the form of men, and named me "Mercurius" and Barnabas "Jupiter"; and they would have worshiped us with sacrifice and offerings, if we had not vigorously protested. Nothing, perhaps, would have followed to our hurt, if it had not been for certain Jews who had followed us from Antioch and Iconium. These again aroused the people against us, and I was seized and hurried out of the city and stoned by the mob, who withdrew only after they thought they had killed me.

As the stones, hurled by these furious men, fell upon and about me, hurting me cruelly, I recalled another scene, which had occurred in Jerusalem, and upon which I had looked with complete approval—the stoning of Stephen, whose only offense was that he preached a Risen Christ. I could not but regard my own unhappy lot as something like a divine reckoning. I knew now how he had suffered.

It was not God's will for me to die at this time, however; I had not yet borne testimony for Him before kings. As the new converts stood about my bruised body, believing me to be dead, I received strength to rise and stagger out of the city, which we left the

next day for Derbe. From Derbe we made our way back through the cities that we had visited, and appointed officers over every church, encouraging the believers to remain faithful. We then returned to Antioch. Here we remained a long time, and as we recalled our varied experiences of this, our first attempt to fulfil God's will for us as expressed months before in this same city, we were satisfied that our triumphs had far outnumbered our defeats. The church at Antioch praised God, with us, because He had given such convincing proof that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

In my solitude, in Arabia, Jesus had taught me that there were matters of faith that were fundamental, and had shown me that there were others which were of so little real value that they were not essential to entrance into His kingdom.

When I addressed the Jews, there was no need of speaking of the rite of circumcision, and when I spoke to Gentile nations, I felt that I was not asking them to become Israelites, but Christians; that I was asking them into a kingdom whose King had made no such requirement; so I had not even mentioned this distinctly Jewish rite.

But I found that all men had not so learned Christ, and coming from Damascus to Antioch, these unsettled the faith of many by insisting that circumcision was an essential in the new as well as in the old faith. This teaching both Barnabas and I challenged. The contention became so bitter that it was determined to carry the matter to Jerusalem to the Apostles for de-

cision. We hurried thither and met the leaders of the Church.

We pleaded our case so strongly that the council, presided over by James, decided that Gentiles needed not to become Israelites by circumcision, but that they must abstain from idol worship, from fornication, from eating flesh that had been killed by strangulation, and from the eating of blood. This was a long step in the direction of Christian liberty, and caused great joy among all the Gentile churches, to which the decision was sent by letter and by special messengers, men who had also suffered for the name of the Lord.

Antioch proved a very fruitful field, and we tarried here a long time after our return from Jerusalem; but after a while I felt that we should visit again the churches which we had established, and I suggested it to Barnabas. He was in hearty agreement, and our plans were quickly made, only to be as quickly shattered by a most unfortunate incident. Mark, as I have told you, became frightened at the opposition which we faced, and fled, returning to Antioch, where he waited our return. When our plans for this new journey were made, Barnabas insisted that Mark accompany us again.

To this I objected, feeling that one who had fled once would desert again, and the strife became so bitter between us that we separated, Barnabas taking Mark with him, while I invited Silas to go with me. This separation was a source of very deep sorrow to me; for Barnabas had been a true friend. I was wrong in my decision, as I came to know months later; for

Mark developed, under Barnabas, into a faithful witness, and I was glad to have him with me in the latter part of my ministry; for he comforted me when I needed greatly the sympathy of human friends.

In spite of this separation, the work grew amazingly.

This second visit to the churches that we had organized meant a repetition of our earlier experiences. In every city the appeal to the Jews was followed by the more successful appeal to the Gentiles, and this was succeeded by opposition and by one form or another of physical suffering. I shall not weary you with details, except to say, without thought of boasting—for I was happy to think that Jesus had thought me worthy to endure suffering for His name's sake—that in the Roman city of Thyatira we had felt the sting of the scourge as it cut the flesh, and imprisonment in the dungeon until Jesus struck our bonds from us and from all other prisoners in the prison house, and threw the doors wide open before us, resulting in the conversion of the whole household of the jailer; that on four other occasions I received forty stripes, save one, at the hands of the magistrates; that at Ephesus I was forced to fight in the arena with beasts; that three times I was beaten with rods; that three times I suffered shipwreck; that many times I suffered from hunger and from thirst and from cold; but God always gave me strength to continue, and I never lacked for words to speak. But the theme of my every message was the death and the resurrection of Jesus. This was the message that was always filled with the power to cause men to kneel at His feet and worship.

This physical pain was nothing compared to the mental agony through which I passed again and again, as I saw the hardness of heart of my people Israel, and of some of those among the Gentiles from whom I felt that my Gospel was entitled to receive a more gracious hearing.

Particularly was this true at Athens. When at school at Tarsus I had heard much of this great city, and I hoped at some time to visit it and to make a personal inspection of her great university, which was so keen a rival of the University of Tarsus. At last I entered her gates. One thing in particular impressed and depressed me. Everywhere I turned I found evidences of the superficiality of her instruction; for in this great seat of learning there was evidence of one great lack—the failure to find or give forth the knowledge of the true God. This was not because such knowledge or revelation had been entirely withheld from the great thinkers of Greece; for her greatest philosophers, Socrates, Aristotle, Plato and others, had more than hinted at their perception of the emptiness of this mythical religion, and of the value of a faith in one supreme Deity. In the very heart of the city, altars had been raised to every known deity, and, fearful that one might not have been known to them, and by unintentional neglect might become incensed, an altar had been erected "To the Unknown God." I was impressed with the evident desire of the people to worship.

I stood about as the learned men of the city discussed their great problems, and, when opportunity offered, I talked with them of my own philosophy and

my own faith. They were always eager to meet with something novel, and an invitation was extended to me to speak to the assembled philosophers when they should meet on Mars Hill. I readily agreed to meet them, and the time was set some days in advance.

I assure you that I felt the great responsibility of presenting my faith to these learned men, and for days I made ready to meet them upon their own ground. I, too, had been schooled in their methods of thought. At last the day came, and the meeting-place was crowded. I began to speak to them. With all the power of logic, with all the eloquence that I could command, with all the skill that a pleader of a great cause could summon to his help, I presented my proposition to them, and, because of their attention, I felt that I was making a deep and winning impression upon them.

I became enthusiastic as I approached the climax of my presentation—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead—and His kingship over men's minds and hearts. When I spoke of these mighty truths a smile of incredulity at first swept over their upturned faces; then a titter was heard, and even while I was speaking to them, they broke into loud and uproarious laughter.

The scourge of the lictor cut the flesh; the stocks brought their own torture to my body. Hunger and thirst were agony to me; but never had anything so overwhelmed me with its torture; nothing had ever so nearly crushed me—not even the stones at Lystra—as this ridicule from the wise men of Greece.

I left Athens at once, with that awful roar of ridi-

cule ringing in my ears, and made my way to Corinth, where I took up my old labor as a tent-maker, about ready to give up; and, really, I do not know that I would ever have spoken again for my faith if it had not been for the appearance to me of Jesus in a vision, and His words of encouragement and cheer, when He said to me: "Be not afraid, Paul, but speak, hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city." This proved to be true, and I remained here for more than a year and six months.

All this physical and mental anguish I had endured while bearing witness to my own people and to the Gentile nations, to which the Lord had led us.

I had yet to witness before kings.

I had been a long time away from Jerusalem. I yearned to tell my fellow Apostles what the Lord had done through me, and I really wanted to enjoy again the great feast in our capital city. Turning my face toward Jerusalem, I timed my journey so as to arrive at the feast period. I felt that the Spirit was leading me in this, as in all things else; but in every city in which I tarried, I was told that great afflictions awaited me, that bonds and imprisonment would surely be my portion, if I entered Jerusalem.

My enemies had not been idle, and had long before carried reports detrimental to me to Jerusalem, so that the rulers were very bitter against me. This found expression in the most unexpected ways upon my arrival. Riots, plots against my life, attempts to kill me were parts of the program. I was soon placed in the tower by the Roman officer for safe-keeping and

for examination. While here, my nephew discovered a conspiracy formed by about forty men, who were bound by an oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they had slain me. I sent for the guard and told him of what I had learned, and he sent me that night under heavy guard to Cæsarea Philippi, where I remained for a long long time a prisoner of Rome.

My accusers followed me to Cæsarea, and here for the first time I defended myself against their accusations, which were presented by one Tertullus. Felix was the governor of this province, and after charges had been made against me, he gave me permission to reply to them. I denied their every accusation, and so clearly disproved their charges that Felix stated that time would be required for fuller investigation by him, and directed that my jailor should allow me a large degree of liberty and that my friends should be permitted to visit me at their pleasure.

Many times after this Felix sent for me and asked me about my faith. One of these occasions I remember especially. Felix was living in open adultery with a Jewess named Drusilla. I do not know that he knew that I was aware of this. She being a member of my own race, and acquainted with my religion, Felix may have felt that she could help him to arrive at some definite conclusion. I spoke to them very briefly of my troubles with the rulers at Jerusalem, and then of my great and holy passion—faith in Jesus Christ. I did not care for myself, what might happen to me, for now I recognized a great opportunity—to win these two to Christ.

Forgetting everything else, with all the fervor of my

soul centered in this one effort, I reasoned with them of three great subjects that touched their own lives—of self-control, of righteousness, and of judgment to come, in which Christ would sit as judge. I know that my Master was with me and pleaded with these rulers of men in my every word to them. They were much affected; I saw them actually tremble, but when I had finished, they rose, and Felix said to me, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

I was led back to my prison cell; my first testimony before the rulers of the earth had ended apparently in failure. I was greatly depressed, for I had hoped for so much; but as I sat in my cell, I realized that Jesus had not promised me that I would convince all before whom I might speak, but that I was specially chosen by Him as one who would present Him for acceptance or rejection before the kings of the earth; and I found great comfort in the thought that I was to testify—that the results were with Him.

Felix was relieved by Festus, to whose keeping I was committed, and almost as soon as he was seated upon the throne, my enemies again appeared and made their charges and demanded this time that I be returned to Jerusalem and to the courts of my own people. I knew what this would mean to me, and for the second time in all of my experiences, I demanded the rights of a Roman citizen and appealed my case to Rome, to Cæsar's judgment seat. This ended the participation in my case of my accusers at Jerusalem, but it did not end my imprisonment, altho I continued

to enjoy large liberty. My defense before Festus was my second effort at witnessing before kings.

In the course of time Festus was visited by Agrippa, a Jew who had been advanced into great favor by Rome, and who was now King of Cæsarea and Samaria. He and his wife, Bernice, had come to pay their respects to the new governor, and in the course of their visit Festus spoke to Agrippa of me, a prisoner; of his difficulty in disposing of my case, and of my appeal to Cæsar. He declared that there was no charge against me worthy of transmitting to Cæsar, and he told Agrippa that if he were interested enough he would bring me before him for a hearing. Agrippa expressed a desire to hear me, and on a certain day I was brought in, and found myself in the presence of Festus and his wife, and of Agrippa and Bernice.

After a very brief explanation of my case, Festus gave me permission to speak.

Once more I was to witness for my Saviour. After a few brief words of appreciation of my opportunity to stand before him in my own defense, I hurriedly sketched my early life; told quickly the story of my own conversion from Judaism to Christianity, and, dismissing these things as of little import, as tho I had forgotten them completely, I called his attention to those other things with which he, as a Jew, was already familiar—the sayings of the Scriptures concerning the Redeemer—pointing out that it was necessary for the Christ both to die and to rise again from the dead.

I became so interested that Festus interrupted me

with the cry, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad."

But I answered, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but I do speak forth the words of truth and soberness; for the king knoweth these things; for none of them have been done in secret by our God."

And then, turning to the king, I cried: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest them."

And the king replied: "Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

He may have spoken these words in irony; perhaps he did; but, seizing upon the words that he had just uttered, I cried: "O King Agrippa, I would to God that not only thou, but all these who hear me this day, were not only almost, but altogether such as I am—except bound as a prisoner of Rome."

My appeal was ended. I was very weary when I sat down, and once more I knew that I had failed in my testimony before the rulers of men; but I had witnessed again for my Master.

Agrippa and Festus decided that I might have been set at liberty by them, if I had not appealed to Rome; but because of this appeal, I would have to appear at Cæsar's throne for final decision of my case.

I was soon on the way to Rome, encountering the worst storm that the master of the vessel had ever seen—a storm that wrecked the vessel on which we rode—a storm which was so terrible in its fury that even I gave up hope of being saved. But once more, in the moment of my complete hopelessness, Jesus appeared to me in a vision in the night, and said to me:

"Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar." We rode out the storm, and at last I reached the city of such great renown and power. I was at last close to Cæsar and the end.

Here I was imprisoned, but given even larger liberty than I had yet enjoyed, being permitted to live in my own house. Here I met with many of my race, some of whom I led to accept Christ. But later I was placed in confinement, and I knew that the end was not far off.

As I look back over the years, my one great regret is that I ever antagonized my Master, or caused those who believed in Him to suffer. My one glory is the cross, and as the evening shadows gather close and dark about me, I feel that I have fought a good fight; that I have run to the end of the course, and have won; that I have kept untarnished my faith in Jesus as my Lord and Master, and that a crown waits for me, a crown which Christ the righteous Judge will give me when I appear before Him; a crown of everlasting life, which shall lose neither its beauty nor its worth through all the ages; a crown that will be the reward of every one who loves Him passionately, and who patiently waits for and longs for His appearing.

XVII

JESUS: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

No one, it seems to me, should attempt to impersonate the Master, to try to analyze the divine mind and heart. When in the plan I came to Jesus, I hesitated, and finally decided that in these Scriptures, Jesus' own story must be found—found in His own words.

So I made careful search throughout the four Gospels and the book of The Revelation for His own story. The following is the result, without the introduction of a single syllable.

To find this story was a great delight to me. I hope it will give the reader great pleasure and profit.

THE AUTHOR.

XVII

JESUS: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

YE ARE from beneath; I am from above. Ye are of this world; I am not of this world. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but, if I do, tho ye believe not me, believe the works that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him. I and my Father are one. I am the Son of God.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world. The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. He gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak. He that heareth not my words hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.

Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

I am not come of myself, but He that sent me is true, whom ye know not, but I know Him; for I am from Him and He hath sent me. My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me, and He that sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always the things that please Him.

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If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. It is written in your law that the testimony of two

men is true. I am one that beareth witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness of the truth; but I receive not the testimony from man. He was a burning and shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me.

And the Father Himself which hath sent me hath borne witness of me. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.

When the Comforter is come, whom I will send from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me. He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you.

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Let no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, "I am Christ," and shall deceive many. There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders. Then, if any man shall say unto you, "Lo, here is Christ, or there," believe it not. Wherefore, if they say unto you, "Behold, He is in the desert," go not forth; "Behold, He is in the secret chambers," believe it not. Behold, I have told you before.

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I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me, and this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing. This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them; to seek and to save that which was lost.

For judgment I am come into the world, that they which see not might see, and they which see, might be made blind.

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, and he that taketh not his cross and followeth me is not worthy of me.

I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled.

I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly; for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled.

The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto,

but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved.

He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth the truth, cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

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I am the Light of the World. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the World. Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world; but if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth because there is no light. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness. Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light that ye may be the children of light.

I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to me shall

never hunger. Verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; for the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. I am that Bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.

I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that I shall give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed. He that eateth my flesh, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat and are dead, he that eateth of this bread shall live forever. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not.

Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him, a well of water springing up into

everlasting life, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst; as the Scripture hath said, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

. . . . . .

I am the Good Shepherd and know my sheep and am known of mine. He that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. I am the door of the sheep. All that came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

I am the Door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture. The thief cometh not but for to steal and kill and destroy. I am come that they might have life. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also

must I bring, and they shall hear His voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

My sheep know my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

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I am the Vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He scourgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. Abide in me and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself except that it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.

I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and they are cast into the fire and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.

Herein is my Father glorified: that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you;

continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love.

. . . . . .

These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. Greater love hath no man than this—that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit might remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of my Father, in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. If I had not done among them works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father.

These things have I spoken unto you that ye should not be offended. I have many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now. A little while, and ye

shall see me, and again a little while, and ye shall not see me because I go unto the Father. Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

. . . . . .

I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth the dead, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

He that heareth my words and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

Verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself. Marvel not at this. For the hour is coming, in which all that are in the grave shall hear His voice, and shall come forth. They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life! No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life

shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, ye may be also. I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come unto you. Yet a little while, and the world shall see me no more, but ye see me. Because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

. . . . . .

Believest thou this? If I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. He that believeth on me, believeth not on me but on Him that sent me. If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

He that is of God, heareth God's word. If God were your Father, ye would love me. If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my

words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

. . . . . .

The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

When ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled; for such things must needs be, but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines, and sore troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows.

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall He send His angels, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of the heaven; but of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

Watch ye, therefore, lest, coming, He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!

When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be

gathered all nations. And He shall separate them one from the other, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left.

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat. I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me. I was sick, and ye visited me. I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee, or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?"

And the King shall answer and say unto them, "Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Then shall He say unto them on His left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat. I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not."

Then shall they also answer and say unto Him, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?"

Then shall He answer them saying: "Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me."

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

. . . . . .

These things have I spoken unto you being yet present with you. Hereafter, I will not talk much with you. If ye love me, keep my commandments.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father.

All that the Father giveth unto me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

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